BING

WINTER
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THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

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Honorary Life Member LESLIE GAYLOR

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Membership renewals fall due on 1st. January each year and subscription rates effective for 1999 remain as:

UK	£8 per annum
Mainland Europe, including Eire	£9 per annum
USA and Canada	US $20 per annum
Australia and New Zealand	A$30 per annum
South America	£11.50 per annum

All remittances should be sent in **£ sterling** payable to 'Michael Crampton - ICC' with the exception of (a) U.S. and Canadian members who should send their remittances in U.S. dollars to F. B. Wiggins (b) Australian and New Zealand members who should pay David Currington in Australian dollars (c) Mainland European members (not Eire) who should pay Etty Gits in £ sterling. For addresses see inside front cover.

Articles for inclusion in the magazine should be sent to the Magazine Editor.
Other Correspondence concerning membership, non-arrival of the magazine or other aspects of the club's affairs should be sent to the Hon. Secretary/Treasurer.

BING is the official journal of the International Crosby Circle and is published in the Spring, Summer and Winter of each year. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICC. All original material ©Copyright ICC 1998.

EDITORIAL

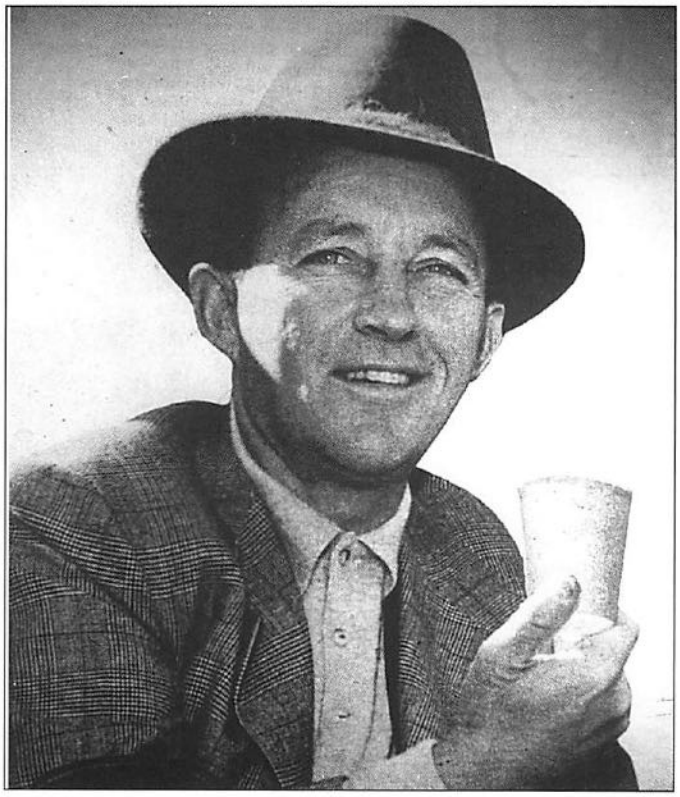
So 1998 is nearly over and another Christmas is upon us. How quickly the years pass by but how pleasing to note that Bing's name continues to be prominent in so many fields. New CDs containing unissued material, missing films such as 'Top O' the Morning' turning up, new books published (and on the way), new video releases and so on - who would have thought it 21 years ago when Bing passed on?

Some of the new CDs are due to the efforts of members such as Wig Wiggins, Jim Reilly, John McNicholas, Ken Barnes and Geoff Milne amongst others and our grateful thanks are due to all concerned. A new book about Bing by Michael Freedland has been published and is reviewed elsewhere in the magazine. Gary Giddins' book is almost there and please see the letter from Gary in our letter pages for further information. The book by member Norman Wolfe has been completed and is in his publisher's hands. I have seen an early draft of this and I found it very interesting indeed because it looks at Bing's life from slightly different angles to the many books we have already seen.

You will read in the letters pages that Keith and Kath Parkinson were involved in a serious road accident some months ago. Kath's injuries were rather more serious than Keith's and naturally Keith is spending most of his time in helping Kath back to full health. Despite this, Keith still managed to come up with his usual articles and we send all good wishes from the Club to Kath for a speedy recovery and our thanks to Keith for his continued support of the ICC at a difficult time.

Turning to the magazine, it is fair to say that many members were disappointed with the standard of reproduction of our last coloured cover. Discussions have been ongoing with the printer and I hope that the cover of this issue is of better quality. Although I see a draft version of the magazine before it goes out, I don't see the final version until it drops through my letter box and I was as disappointed as you all when I saw the last cover. Some last minute alterations by me to the draft version were not actioned properly either and so there were a few glitches here and there. My apologies for these. By the way, the material for our back cover this time has been provided by the indestructible Ralph Harding.

I continue to be amazed by the information explosion on the Internet. Steven Lewis has developed a marvellous site devoted to Bing which expands by the week with many daily entries appearing on the bulletin board. It was even possible for me to see and hear Bing's induction into the Radio Hall of Fame via this medium. Steven has several nice links through to the ICC's home page on the 'net' which should ensure that we attract members from this source.



We heard recently from Starline Holidays about a Hollywood and Las Vegas Tour they are arranging for October next year when they will be visiting Holy Cross cemetery to see Bing's last resting place. They are also organising a special Millennium Tour for 2000. Several members have enjoyed holidays with Starline in Hollywood in the past and those interested in these new tours should contact Ian Bishop at First Service Corporate Travel, 44 Sydney Street, Brighton, Sussex BN1 4EP for details. Ian's telephone number is 01273 601234.

Members may like to know that Jim Reilly is preparing a 12 page A5 booklet containing essential information about Bing's life and career. We hope to issue this to all members and to anyone enquiring about Bing and the ICC. It will also be useful to the many disc jockeys who play Bing's records. A side benefit is that it will be factually accurate and will slow down the flow of misinformation that continues to confuse new recruits to the field of Crosbyana.

So, let me allow you to get on with reading this issue of the magazine. All that remains is for me thank all of our contributors for their hard work over the last twelve months and to wish all of our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Malcolm Macfarlane

SECRETARY / TREASURER'S REPORT

It's a great pleasure to begin my report by announcing that the members attending the 1998 AGM were unanimous in their decision to award HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP to Leslie Gaylor. The award recognises Leslie's unique contribution to the world of Crosbyana and the members were mindful of all that Leslie has done to keep Bing's name before the public these past 50 years. Well done Leslie. The certificate presented to Leslie appears on a following page.

Members also praised and applauded the work of Wig and Laura Wiggins both of whom have grown the International Crosby Circle to be a highly regarded club in the United States and Canada.

Ron Bosley will report on Leeds 1998 but here I would like to say thank you to Jim Reilly and Arnold Pope for their ever present support and a big thank you to all 60 members who helped make this another special Leeds day.

NEW MEMBERS

AUSTRALIA

We are delighted to welcome - Lloyd Helton who enjoys getting around to retirement homes singing Crosby songs, Barbara Woodfine who was the original Australian representative for Club Crosby. Aaron Tickner who has just become a teacher at age 23 and who introduced a group of Beatles fans to 'Hey Jude' which they loved. Tasso Matheas who is a keen fan in his twenties and Alan Saunders who loves 20's style music which is featured prominently by the band for which he is a washboard player.

UNITED STATES & CANADA

Wig is to be congratulated once again on his magnificent effort to increase International Crosby Circle membership and on this occasion we are privileged to welcome 52 (!!) new members. Well done Wig and warmest greetings to:- Michael Schnurr (Ohio), Eric Manley (New York), Steve Murphy (Cal.), Robert Taylor (Ind.), Anthony DiFlorio (Penn.), Alan Marston (Cal.), William Matthews (Ari.), Allen Keller (New York), Crissi Newton (Louisiana), Dorothy Hart (Cal.), Dawn Nash (New York), Tom Williams (Geo.), Henry Mustin (Vir.), Howard Gann (Ark.), Raymond Nale (Penn.), Paul Nehrich (New York), James Hojnowski (Penn.), Patrick Peterson (New York), Robert Conrad (NJ), Frank Keys (Mass.), William Brooks (New York), Wallace Anthony (Flor.), Phillip Crosland (Del.), Richard Shoemaker (Ill.), Thomas Bewley (Seattle Washington), Charles Johnston (Penn.), Robert Remaly (Penn.), Michael O'Driscoll (NJ), Robert Grace (Tex.), Ed Walker (Maryland), Richard Hanley (New York), Dennis Marshall (British Columbia), Alan Matheson (British Columbia), Lowell Peart (Maryland), Stan Wilson (Ind.), Benjamin Miller (NJ), Bryan Bodger (NJ), Rob Bamberger (Vir.), Trent Clifton (Oregon), Kevin Trainer (Maryland), Kathryn Bartfield (Vir.), Kurt Schroeder (Vir.), Ron Collamore (Neb.), Guy Steele (Hawaii), Edward Sinnot (NJ), Anthony Fischer (New York), Danielle Peterson (Wisc.), John Anderson (Cal), Nathan Goldhaber (New York), Dieter Pressler (Anacortes Washington), Bill Piccone (Penn.), Ryan Foster (Oregon).

ENGLAND

Welcome to May Hurcombe (aged 77) from Reading in Berkshire who has been a devoted fan of Bing's for nearly 60 years and she is enjoying her journals despite the male bias that she detects within the pages of BING.

We also extend the hand of friendship to:- Bob Pindar (Nottingham), Mr. P D Wollard (Essex), Mr. E G Allen (London), Mr. P A Keegan (Mid - Glamorgan) and Ray Jenks (of BMG International).

COLUMBIA

Sue Horn has reached us via the Internet and we are delighted to welcome our first member in Bogota, South America. We hope that Sue will derive much pleasure from her membership of the International Crosby Circle.

THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Dr. Jan Adam has been in touch with us from Pardubice in the Czech Republic. He is a journalist who is writing articles on Bing and we have provided him with support material. Jan has also sent us copies of newspaper articles about Bing which we can safely say are the first from the Czech Republic to be put in the club's archives.

BING CROSBY IN THE 1950's

We now have 23 orders for Gary Hamann's latest book and I propose to secure 30 copies to allow for 7 further orders which members can obtain from me from December 1998 onwards.

BING ON COMPACT DISC.

At the time of writing 'More Memories' is not generally available although we were privileged to hear tracks from it at Leeds. Quality is superb and this is one that should not be missed.

The Complete Decca Songbook *BING CROSBY - The Voice of Christmas* is now released in the United States and this has to be the best ever issue of Bing's Decca Christmas material. This double CD set is beautifully presented with liner notes by our own Wig Wiggins and the art work and presentation are superb. There are 44 tracks on two CDs and this will surely become a most sought after collection. It is worth buying the set just to obtain the two unissued tracks of 'Silent Night' and 'White Christmas' (A take). Well done Wig and MCA.

RARE RECORD FIND?

No more news as yet on the matter mentioned in the last BING.

DONATIONS

Members continue to give generously to our funds and we thank Joe Cain of Prescot, Merseyside for his gift of a fine 'Crosby Clock' . The clock was raffled at Leeds and raised

£80 for club funds. Leeds attendees continued to buy from Ted Burnell's collection and with the help of Pat Macfarlane and Joyce Pairpoint a further sum of £110 was raised. Barry Whittingham and George Harwood kindly donated sums to help swell our funds. Thanks to all who give generously at our Leeds Dinner/Meeting.

The Crosby Clock. See Trading Post for details.

THE ICC ON THE INTERNET

Due to pressure of work, I have been unable to do much development of our site but this will receive attention as soon as possible. It is very pleasing to note how many people are visiting it and if nothing else they are obtaining our e-mail and postal addresses.

SUBSCRIPTIONS 1999

YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR 1999 IS DUE ON THE 1ST OF JANUARY AND I WOULD BE DELIGHTED IF ALL MEMBERS ARE PROMPT WITH THEIR RENEWAL. THE FEE REMAINS AT THE 1998 LEVEL BUT I SHOULD WARN THAT THE FEE FOR UK MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR 2000 WILL BE £10 SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE 1999 ANNUAL MEETING.

Until Spring may I extend cordial festive greetings to all members and their families.

Michael Crampton

Honorary Life Membership

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

The International Crosby Circle is pleased to award honorary life membership to:-

Leslie Gaylor

4th October 1998

In making the award the ICC wishes to pay tribute to Leslie for his outstanding contribution to the world of Crosbyana and especially for his unique efforts to promote and honour Bing's name and work these past sixty years.

On behalf of all ICC members

Michael Crampton

Michael Crampton

Secretary Treasurer ICC

LETTER FROM LESLIE

Our man on the Isle of Wight, Leslie Gaylor, sends us his regular note.

Dear Members,

Once again I would like to thank all those responsible for producing the last issue of the BING magazine. I always look forward with great interest to receiving each issue. The keenness and continual devotion of members to the ICC and Bing's memory is greatly appreciated.

I really was very surprised and honoured to learn from Secretary Michael that the members had voted for me to be given Honorary Life Membership of the ICC. I do very much appreciate this honour and thank you to you all for your kindness. The certificate will be given a special place in my Bing room.

When it comes to new releases of compact discs Bing is still very well represented and I for one am pleased to see this most pleasing trend. It is also good to see members actively involved with the record companies. I was thrilled to read in the last issue of BING that Andy McKaie, Vice President of MCA in Los Angeles, had tied up with that highly energetic USA member Wig Wiggins for the purposes of releasing a 2CD package "The Voice Of Christmas"

Of late, I have enjoyed listening to the Radio 2 programme on Sunday afternoons that is hosted by Russell Davies. He gave a nice plug for the Jonzo Record label and played one of my all-time favourites "Moonstruck". It was thrilling to hear the voice of the young Bing Crosby over the airwaves. It was quite unexpected.

I am always being asked by members what gives me the most pleasure to reminisce about on matters concerning Bing. Forgive me if I repeat myself but you can imagine how proud I feel about my associations with Bing. He was as we all know one of the legendary figures in the world of entertainment and yet he regarded me, a mere factory worker, as one of his friends. I am proud that I was also able to play a small part in matters relating to his career although I myself had no connections in the show business world. I also reminisce about my visits to see Bing recording the "That's What Life Is All About" and "Seasons" albums both through the good offices of Ken Barnes. Those days in the recording studios will always be remembered with great affection. It was during the Seasons sessions that Bing autographed the sleeve of "Beautiful Memories" and wrote "To Leslie, Thank you for so many things, Bing Crosby". This sleeve has been framed and is on display in my Crosby room.

I am also proud of the cheques Bing sent me and I often recall the expressions on the lady bank tellers faces when I cashed them - they thought I was pulling their legs. With the help of the Crosby office I was able to get all 18 cheques returned to me and they too have been framed and hang in the Bing room. From time to time Bing gifted me various photographs and I particularly prize the two that relate to the occasions when he received his Platinum discs. The first disc was presented to him on the 9th June 1960 and the citation reads "To Bing Crosby, 1st Citizen of the recording industry whose unparalleled sales of more than 200,000,000 records is greatly responsible for the recording business becoming one of America's great industries". The second platinum disc was presented to Bing on the 15th September 1970 and was awarded to commemorate the sales of more than 300,650,000 records. If you refer to BING 106 you can see a photo of me holding these framed photographs.

Over the years, I have received many letters from Bing and gifts of books from him and Kathryn. I also had a marvellous letter from the celebrated songwriter Johnny Mercer saying that Bing's recording of his song "I'm An Old Cowhand" paved the way to Hollywood for him. The letter that however takes pride of place has to be a hand written one from Bing that he wrote to me from Claridges Hotel, London on 21st August 1975. It reads:-

"Dear Leslie, I fully appreciate the many things you have done on behalf of my English image and career. I am sure none of it would have happened without your impetus. I can tell you also it has been great fun working with Barnes, Moore, Drewett, Astaire and so many others. Reawakens my interest in the business. Let's hope something serious develops. Yours Bing"

Another prized gift came from Bing's butler Alan Fisher with a short note saying, "Dear Leslie, Here is one of the very last golfing hats belonging to B.C. Yours, Alan".

I have been very lucky and I could reminisce all day long about so many wonderful memories related to Bing and my many Crosby friends. Space would not permit this so I will sign off by wishing all members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope that you all have a very good winter.

Leslie Gaylor

"Bing Crosby's coming to my funeral"

A recent insert enclosed with the Radio Times contained these rather surprising words as part of an advertisement for funeral plans. The text continued:

> *"The fact is like a lot of women of my age, I've been a huge fan of Bing's music for ages. So at my funeral I want to make sure they play his version of 'Long Ago and Far Away'. It isn't morbid, it's simply accepting the fact that we've all got to go sometime so we might as well have things planned the way we want. With Dignity, the pre-arranged funeral service, I can make all the funeral arrangements now and forget about them."*

There's no such thing as bad publicity!

Bing's Yo-Yo Song?

The Daily Mail of October 8th. ran a feature on the age old toy, the Yo-Yo. Amongst the facts and figures was the following:

"Bing Crosby recorded the song My Little Yo-Yo in 1930 with the lyrics: "What is the dearest thing on earth, That fills my soul with joy and mirth? My yo-yo!"

Well, there's a new one! Anyone got any bright ideas what this might refer to?

Rich Little comes to London

I mentioned in BING #118 that I had met Rich Little and Gord Atkinson in February in Florida. Rich told me then that he was appearing at the Green Room of the Cafe Royal in London in July and I made a note to see if I could get down to see him. As we know, Rich worked with Bing on several occasions. He was one of the speakers who 'roasted' Bing on the TV show 'Here Come the Stars' which was shown on February 14, 1969 and from that show, we have just received from Ken Barnes (a long time close friend of Rich's) a photo of a young Rich Little doing his bit.

Bing and Rich met again on January 19, 1976 when Gord Atkinson took Rich along to see Bing recording with Ken Barnes at the United Western Studios in Hollywood. Bing and Rich then appeared on the Merv Griffin TV show in January 1976 and following this, Bing invited Rich to take part in the 'Bing Crosby and Friends' stage show put on at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Los Angeles on March 17, 1976. Bing also appeared on Rich's own show on NBC which was shown on April 5, 1976. Later that year, on September 19 in San Francisco, Bing was presented with the Armstrong Award for pioneering contributions to radio and Gord Atkinson also received an award at the same ceremony. Rich Little was one of the speakers and Ken Barnes has also provided a photo of this event showing Rich, Kathryn Crosby and Bing. Gord recently sent me a cassette of the speeches which was most entertaining

So it was that Pat and I went to the plush surroundings of the Cafe Royal to see Rich on Saturday, July 11. Ken Barnes had taken a party along a night or two earlier and we had been invited to join them but unfortunately I was committed to various appointments at work.

After an opening act from a girl singer, Rich took over the proceedings and gave an entertaining and masterful performance. His impressions are breathtakingly accurate and whilst he tends to concentrate on movie greats of the past, including Bing, he does several modern personalities, notably Bill Clinton. His presentation of USA Presidents was particularly impressive. Rich really deserved a wider audience during his visit to the UK because he has a remarkable talent for mimicry and comedy which would amaze UK viewers if he appeared on TV programmes over here.

During his performance, Rich had to put up with some loud mouthed cricket supporters from Leicestershire whose match against Essex had been delayed by rain and he coped with these admirably. After the rude interruptions of Ken Barnes when he spoke at our Leeds meeting last year, I am beginning to despair about the manners shown to performers and speakers in this country. What has happened to us that we behave so badly? Well done Rich for taking it in your stride and our apologies on behalf of the British public for the poor behaviour of some of us.

Malcolm Macfarlane

A Tribute to the One and Only Bing Crosby

Franc Joyce wrote a short poem to commemorate the anniversary of Bing's passing.

When we think of great crooners only one comes to mind,
He was the King of them all the very best of his kind,
His voice was unique and proved to be quite a sensation,
When he made his first broadcast to nearly all of the nation.
Yes he caused quite a stir in the year 1931,
When he sang 'Just One More Chance' he was clearly second to none,
Since then many have laboured just to copy his style,
But singers like Bing come but "Once in a While",
Yes they've all tried in turn but without much success,
Because they were unable to emulate this great man's finesse.
And the reason is clear if this pun I might quote
He was born with a silver croon in his throat.
He thrilled millions of his fans "It Must Be True",
With his velvet like tones and his boo boo boo boo.
But 21 years ago Bing sadly passed away,
and now lies "Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day".
So thank you Bing for all your wonderful renditions
that we still hear on radio and see on our televisions.
And as Historians look back it will most surely come out,
That you were really the greatest, And of that there is no doubt.

Franc Joyce

Chris Evans vs. Cliff Richard

In October, high profile Virgin Radio DJ, Chris Evans was critical of UK pop icon Cliff Richard and easy listening stars in general which led to some tense exchanges between the parties and their respective fans. The Daily Mail captured this brilliantly with a cartoon by Mac which we have pleasure in reproducing below with grateful thanks to the Mail.

Great! That was another from Cliff. Now, what have we got? Wowee! A Bing Crosby compilation...'

When Bing was King

Before the days of rock and jive,
Henry Hall's band played at five,
About the time of jazz and swing,
When we were young and Bing was "King"—
Stardust, Rhapsody in Blue,
Georgia, these are but a few
Melodies born just to stay
From golden years of yesterday,
When, free from trouble, toil and care,
We had time to stand and stare,
With no continuous pressures then,
Oh, to live those years again,
With Formby, Fats and Hutch to sing,
Such happy days when Bing was "King".

ROSEMARY YOUNG

With thanks to Evergreen magazine

BING IN THE USA

BING (FINALLY) INDUCTED INTO THE RADIO HALL OF FAME

On October 11, 1998, twenty-one years after his death and ten years after the establishment of the American Radio Hall of Fame, Bing finally was inducted as this year's first honoree during a black-tie ceremony that was broadcast nationwide by radio from Chicago.

Founded by the Emerson Radio Corporation in 1988, administration of the Radio Hall of Fame was assumed in 1991 by Chicago's Museum of Broadcast Communications. Inductees are selected through a national balloting process that includes some 5,000 radio executives and broadcast historians throughout the United States. Kathryn Crosby was present to accept Bing's award, and in her brief remarks said that while Bing was not usually into accepting awards, she nevertheless appreciated his being recognized by the Radio Hall of Fame this year. Although better late than never, my reaction was why did it take a decade for the Hall of Fame to recognize Bing, who was first and foremost a top radio star for twenty-five years? There is, of course, never a good answer to any such question.

BIX AND BING

Like many Crosby collectors, I have always been very interested in the short, tragic life of jazz immortal Bix Beiderbecke, partly because of his joint recordings with Bing and Paul Whiteman during the late 1920's, but also because of Bix's undiminished stature as the preeminent white cornetist of the pre-swing era. In fact, the second 78 rpm record I ever bought, in 1944, was a Columbia reissue of Bix's "Jazz Me Blues" (the first was Decca's "Don't Fence Me In" by Bing and the Andrews Sisters). There have been several books written about Bix's career, some good and some bad. ICC member Phil Evans of Bakersfield, California has now published what clearly is the definitive book about Bix's life, based on more than 1,000 interviews and letters from those who knew Bix best -- his family and his fellow musicians -- including Paul Whiteman, Frank Trumbauer and even Bing, among many others. Phil's book contains complete discographical information about each of Bix's some 200 recordings, including all of the "Bix 'n' Bing" collaborations with Paul Whiteman. It also includes Bing's own comments from a 1969 interview with the author about several of the Whiteman recordings. BIX: THE LEON BIX BEIDERBECKE STORY is available by mail order directly from the author, at the cost of $45.00, plus $5.50 for shipping and handling (U.S. funds). Interested American and Canadian members should write to Phil Evans, P.O. Box 10507, Bakersfield, California 93389 to order copies. Members in the United Kingdom and Europe should order through Michael Crampton, and those in Australia and New Zealand through David Currington.

OTHER BOOKS THAT MENTION BING (JUST A LITTLE)

ICC member Richard Grudens of Stony Brook, New York is a journalist whose career has involved personal interviews with many of the big band leaders and popular vocalists who have appeared on the New York music scene over the past fifty years. Richard has now converted his personal interviews with these stars into a series of three paperback books which cover the gamut from Louis Armstrong to Margaret Whiting. Entitled THE BEST DAMN TRUMPET PLAYER, THE SONG STARS and THE MUSIC MEN, the first and third books in Richard's series each feature a section about Bing.

Although Richard did not actually interview Bing, the Old Groaner did ask to use Richard's telephone at the NBC studios in New York one day in 1952. Nevertheless, THE BEST DAMN TRUMPET PLAYER does contain a warm appraisal of Bing based on that brief incident, while THE MUSIC MAN features a more in-depth tribute to Al Jolson and Bing as "the foundation and builders', of the world of popular music from the 1920's to the 1950's. THE MUSIC MAN also includes a letter of appreciation to the author from Kathryn Crosby. These three books can be purchased by mail order directly from Richard Grudens, Box 344 Main Street, Stony Brook, New York 11790 for $17.95 each (U.S. funds). If you enjoy reading about the popular leaders and "boy and girl singers" of the American big band era, these three books will be welcome additions to your music library.

NEW BING VIDEOS FROM FESTIVAL FILMS

Fellow ICC members Ron Hall and Bob DeFlores have released two new videos in their outstanding series of Bing Crosby programs offered by Festival Films of Minnesota. These are two complete, unedited versions (including all of the fascinating, original commercials) of two of Bing's finest early television specials. The first tape contains the famous EDSEL SHOW from October 1957, starring Bing and many guests, including Louis Armstrong, Rosemary Clooney, Frank Sinatra and Bing's son Lindsay. Bing and Frank sing several duets together, and there is a delightful closing medley featuring Bing, Rosemary and Frank. A classic television show for a distinctly non-classic car design that quickly disappeared from the Ford showrooms into a comically-legendary status in the world of automotive history.

The second tape has an Oldsmobile Special from September 1959, again starring Bing, Louis Armstrong and Frank Sinatra, but with Peggy Lee instead of Rosemary Clooney. This is one of Bing's seven ABC television programs from the late 1950's and early 1960's that were re-broadcast here in the United States by the Nostalgia cable network in 1996. But this new Festival Films release contains the complete program, including

Bing's solo version of "Rose Colored Glasses", which unfortunately was edited out by Nostalgia and replaced by current commercial advertisements. The reinstated, original Oldsmobile commercials from 1959 are performed by Florence Henderson and Bill Haley and are miniature shows all by themselves, with singing and dancing routines that are quite incredible to see after all these years. Ah, they just don't make them like that anymore! By the way, I reviewed this Oldsmobile Special for BING when it was re-run by Nostalgia television, so if you would like to read a more detailed description of this program, you can find it in BING 112.

These two new videos can be ordered directly from Festival Films, 6115 Chestnut Terrace, Shorewood, Minnesota 55331 for $20.00 each postpaid (U.S. funds). Festival also can be reached by telephone or fax at (612) 470-2172.

ALTERNATE TAKES AND ALTERNATE MISTAKES

The compact disc era continues to produce welcome surprises for Crosby collectors all over the world, as more of Bing's previously unknown and/or unissued alternate takes from his quarter century with Decca are being discovered and released commercially for the first time. It has been a distinct personal pleasure for me to assist in this worthy endeavor, while working with fellow ICC member Andy McKaie of the Universal Music Group on the compilation of various CD sets of Bing's Decca recordings for MCA Records.

ICC members should already be aware of several alternate takes and blow-ups that were released in the 2-CD set of Bing's recordings with the Andrews Sisters (MCAD2-11503), including "There's a Fella Waiting In Poughkeepsie" (L-3684, no take letter assigned), "Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive" (L-3685, no take letter assigned) and "The Freedom Train" (W-73927, no take letter assigned). Also, the new MCA Christmas package, "Bing Crosby: The Voice of Christmas" (MCAD2-11850), includes a previously-unknown alternate take of Bing's first 1935 version of "Silent Night" (DLA-97, take B) plus his initial, slightly imperfect recording of "White Christmas" (DLA-3009, take A).

However, there are several other alternate takes that may have escaped everyone's attention, which I also would like to mention as well. The MCA 4-CD box set "Bing: His Legendary Years" (MCAD4-10887), issued in 1993, includes a previously-unreleased alternate version of Bing's duet with Al Jolson on "The Spaniard That Blighted My Life" (L-4387, no take letter assigned) that was recorded March 25, 1947. I understand that an alternate take also exists of their other duet from that recording session of Irving Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (L-4386). This latter alternate has not yet been released commercially, but it may exist as a test pressing.

Another MCA CD set released in 1994, "Louis Armstrong: Highlights From His Decca Years" (GRD2-638) includes a previously unissued alternate version of Bing's well-known duet with Satchmo on "Gone Fishin'" recorded on April 27, 1951 (L-6262, no take letter assigned). I would like to thank ICC member Ron Cannatella of New Orleans for bringing this find to my attention.

Finally, an alternate mistake caused by incorrect information in the booklet with MCA's 1993 box set honoring the record-breaking musical "OKLAHOMA!". The liner notes for "Rodgers and Hammerstein: 50th Anniversary Collection" (MCAD4-10766), state that it contains a recording of "No Other Love" made for Decca by Bing with Gordon Jenkins and his orchestra on April 21, 1953 (L-7160). But no Crosby discography has ever listed this recording – and for good reason-- because it doesn't exist! Research by fellow ICC member Ken Gray of Pittsburgh has confirmed that, while Gordon Jenkins did make such a recording on that date, it does not have a vocal by Bing. Bing's only recording of "No Other Love" was made for Decca on December 31, 1953 with John Scott Trotter (L-7517), not Gordon Jenkins, as one of six songs recorded that day for release on a 10-inch Decca LP, "Bing Sings the Hits" (DL-5520). To close the circle, I have carefully listened to the Rodgers and Hammerstein box set in my collection, and I can confirm that Bing's version of "No Other Love" in this CD set is Decca L-7517 with John Scott Trotter, not the phantom non-recording with Gordon Jenkins. As we know, liner notes can be wrong, and this is one case where they definitely are incorrect. ICC members with copies of Jim Reilly's invaluable book THE SONGS OF BING CROSBY ON COMPACT DISC should take note and correct Jim's entry on page 154 accordingly.

1 would appreciate it if ICC members would keep me and/or Jim Reilly informed of any other such alternate takes, or mistakes, that come to their attention, so that we can all keep our compact discographies as accurate and up-to-date as possible. The Management Team thanks you for your assistance with this most important project.

BING ON TELEVISION

A number of Bing's films have again been shown on national cable television channels in the United States during the past four months, including repeats of the previously-unavailable "TOP O' THE MORNING" and an unusually-large number of telecasts of "HIGH TIME". Here is the list of those reported to me for this period:

<u>July 1998</u>
THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S - July 7 - (Turner Classic Movies)
THE EMPEROR WALTZ - July 23 - (American Movie Classics)
HERE COMES THE GROOM - July 8,20,26 - (Showtime Channel)
HIGH TIME - July 1,2,13,14,29,30 - (Fox Movie Channel)
ROAD TO MOROCCO - July 6 - (American Movie Classics)
ROBIN & THE SEVEN HOODS - July 29 - (American Movie Classics)
TOP O' THE MORNING - July 23 - (American Movie Classics)

FLIP WILSON SHOW (Bing, Tim Conway, Melba Moore) - July 12 (TVLand)

August 1998

HIGH TIME - August 3,14,18,22 - (Flix Movie Channel)
August 13,14,27 - (Fox Movie Channel)
August 6,11,17,28 - (Encore Movie Channel)
ROAD TO MOROCCO - August 9 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO UTOPIA - August 9 - (American Movie Classics)
ROAD TO ZANZIBAR - August 9 - (American Movie Classics)
ROBIN & THE SEVEN HOODS - August 16 - (American Movie Classics)
TOP O' THE MORNING - August 18, 26 - (American Movie Classics)
FLIP WILSON SHOW (Bing and the Supremes) - August 5,6 - (TVLand)

September 1998

THE ADVENTURES OF ICHABOD & MR. TOAD - September 5 (Disney Channel)
GOING HOLLYWOOD - September 22,28 - (Turner Classic Movies)
HIGH TIME - September 22,23 - (Fox Movie Channel)
September 1,5,21,24,25 - (Showtime Channel)
ROBIN & THE SEVEN HOODS - September 14 - (American Movie Classics)
STAGECOACH (1966) - September 14 - (Cinemax)
THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT - September 30 - (Cinemax)
TOP O' THE MORNING - September 3 - (American Movie Classics)
WELCOME STRANGER - September 3,30 - (American Movie Classics)
FLIP WILSON SHOW (Bing, Tim Conway, Melba Moore) - September 3,4 (TVLand)

October 1998

HERE COMES THE GROOM - October 2,14.27 - (Showtime Channel)
HIGH TIME - October 5,6,20,21 - (Fox Movie Channel)
October 15,20 - (Showtime Channel)
ROAD TO MOROCCO - October 1 - (American Movie Classics)
ROBIN & THE SEVEN HOODS - October 4 - (American Movie Classics)
STAGECOACH (1966) - October 1,6,11,14,26 - (Actionmax Channel)
TOP O' THE MORNING - October 15,19 - (American Movie Classics)
FLIP WILSON SHOW - (Bing and the Supremes) - October 19,20 (TVLand)

BING ON CANADIAN TELEVISION

Kelly Campbell, a twenty-one year old university student from Ontario, and a very enthusiastic ICC member, has informed me that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) from time-to-time features some of Bing's films on its late night telecasts. Kelly wrote that she has been able to add several rarely-seen movies to her video collection thanks to the CBC, including "SHE LOVES ME NOT",

Barry Fitzgerald demonstrates the "height of cordiality" to Bing in 'Top O' The Morning'

"SING YOU SINNERS" AND "DIXIE", while a Canadian specialty channel called "Prime" also recently showed the 1966 version of "STAGECOACH", another hard-to-find film.

In view of Kelly's welcome news on this subject, I would appreciate it if Canadian ICC members would keep me informed on a regular basis of any of Bing's films that appear on television north of the border, so that I can include a more complete listing of Canadian showings in future issues of BING.

BING AND CHRISTMAS

Andy McKaie has informed me that advance orders for the new MCA compact disc set, "BING CROSBY: THE VOICE OF CHRISTMAS", have far exceeded Universal Music's expectations, and it is already being featured in the national mail order catalogs as well. In addition, a 60-minute compilation of excerpts from Bing's many Christmas television specials has been released on commercial video this season, after being shown for the past several years on the Disney cable television channel. So even though the holiday season is still several months away as I write this article, "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like (a Bing) Christmas" on this side of the Atlantic. Accordingly, I would like to extend my best wishes to all of my fellow ICC members for a very merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year in 1999 as I complete my reporting for 1998.

F. B. (Wig) Wiggins

Chicago pays tribute to Bing

In honor of Bing's induction into the Radio Hall of Fame, Chicago radio station WNIB-WNIZ FM 97 paid tribute to Bing on Saturday, October 3. Each Saturday afternoon they have a program called "Those Were the Days" that features old radio broadcasts from 1-5pm. Oct. 3 was "Bingsday", and he was featured for the entire 4 hours. The 8 surviving minutes of " 15 Minutes With Bing Crosby" from September 2, 1931 (CBS) started the show, with the these programs rounding out the afternoon:

Screen Guild Players 26/8/46 "The Bells of St. Mary's" (originally broadcast on CBS)
Kraft Music Hall 2/3/ 44 with Lucille Ball (NBC)
G1 Joumal #94 11/5/45 w/host Bing & Andy Devine, Mel Blanc (AFRS)
Screen Guild Players 14/10/48 "Welcome Stranger" (CBS)
Philco Radio Time 16/10/46 with Bob Hope (ABC)

I'm not able to receive the radio station where I'm located north of Milwaukee, but found out about it during a trip to Chicago. (I wish things would've worked out that I could've been in Chicago for the actual induction, but I had a prior commitment). Sounds like it was a great show.
I've never heard the "Welcome Stranger" broadcast before. You can order a complete transcript of the 4 hours on 2 c120 tapes by sending $30 to 'Those Were The Days' transcripts, Saturday October 3, 1998 show, Box 421 Morton Grove, IL 60053 or for further information, call (847) 965-7763 .

Greg Van Beek

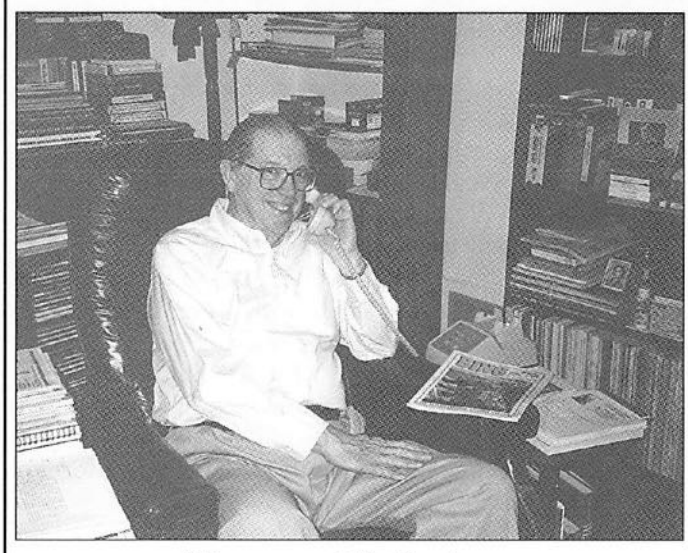
(Editor: I am delighted to see the renewed interest in Bing in the USA and as part of this the indomitable Wig was featured in the Chicago Tribune recently. We have great pleasure in reproducing the article below for all members to see it)

BING'S BACK

Release of 2-CD set signals resurgence in crooner Crosby's popularity.

By Adam Bernstein. Special to the Tribune
ARLINGTON, Va. Wig Wiggins wants to bring Bing back. The American representative of the International Crosby Circle, F.B. "Wig" Wiggins does not whip up any hard-sell tsunami in the name of crooner Bing Crosby. Rather, the retired foreign service economist is gently creating the current to propel the "slow resurgence" in the bub-bub-boo balladeer's popularity. Besides, that's a speed more suggestive of Crosby himself, who died in 1977 at age 74 after a nice, easy-going round of golf.

Scheduled for release Tuesday, the two-CD set, "Bing Crosby: The Voice of Christmas," will mark Wiggins' fourth venture in as many years to bring some of Crosby's recordings to the public. Released through Universal Music Group, the previous CDs showcased Crosby's Irish songs, his work with the Andrews Sisters and his million-selling singles, the so-called Gold Records. Wiggins compiled, annotated and wrote the liner notes for the Irish CD and the Gold Records; he compiled the songs for the Andrews Sisters' release. Universal "has become aware that Bing is marketable," said Wiggins, in whose home in this Washington, D.C., suburb one may spy a stray Miles Davis tape amid the ample "Crosbyana."



Wig amongst his Crosbyana

Andy McKaie, the vice president of catalog development for Universal Music's special markets, said the company does not release sales figures, but some of the Crosby releases have sold better than expected, convincing him there still is a market for Crosby. His method is to have a hook, such as the Irish songs. That 1994 CD performed particularly well, said the University City, Calif.-based

McKaie, whose reissue division houses the thousands of cuts Crosby made with Decca between 1934-57. Producing more than one Crosby CD every year or two does not make sense, he added. "More hurts the market," said McKaie, 51, who has been in the record business since 1972. "It's the same with Muddy Waters, the great blues artist. The audience is not 16-year-olds running out to buy it because they heard the latest single on the radio.... And there are only so many places to sell it."

Rob Bamberger, the host of "Hot Jazz Saturday Night," an internationally syndicated radio show based in Washington, D.C., said it is "striking and heartening" for a music company to allow a collector such as Wiggins to play a major part in organizing a CD release. "Major labels like BMG and Sony Legacy and MCA (Universal Music Group is the umbrella group, covering MCA Records) usually are not very respectful of their old catalogs, and what we've often seen over the years is they tend to recycle their old material over and over again," said Bamberger, 46. Wiggins succeeds in winning over the corporate types, to get them to release what he calls a "gold mine" of recordings, by combining a love of the music with good business sense. Specifically, he exudes appreciation for Crosby without fist-pounding or rambling incoherently, Bamberger said.

The latest release contains 44 tracks dating from between 1935-56. "The Voice of Christmas" will feature every Christmas song Crosby recorded for Decca Records, his musical home during that 21-year period. Two rare recording sessions appear on the collection: a 1935 take of "Silent Night" and an alternative 1942 version of the now classic "White Christmas." So far, neither recording has been released commercially. The "Silent Night" cut, whose profits at the time benefited a missionary group, showcases what Wiggins called the best of Crosby's 1930s period. That is, Crosby's voice confidently reaches high octaves (especially on the line "sleeps in heavenly peace"), but his styling also has a warm, clear bass resonance well-documented later in the previously released "White Christmas," arguably the best-selling recording in history. Entertainment Weekly in May wrote that Elton John's "Candle in the Wind '97" sold 34 million copies, while "White Christmas" sold 30 million. Wiggins declares such comparisons a "non-argument," because no accurate sales charting exists of Crosby's early work. Then he added he has heard that as many as 40 million copies of "White Christmas" have been sold. "The circumstances have caused millions of people to buy that record," Wiggins said of "Candle," which John rewrote to honor Princess Diana after her death. "In my opinion, they do not buy it for the music but as a souvenir." Whereas "White Christmas" will continue to sell indefinitely, he added.

Crosby mostly became identified with Christmas music after he sang Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" in the 1942 film "Holiday Inn." Not long before that, he shed his crooner roue image and became more the "everyman" figure in films and his perennial Christmas special, Bamberger said. Bamberger was unsure whether being so tied to one song had been limiting or a boon for Crosby. "So long as a particular music is in the air, and I mean that in the literal and ethereal sense, then people may come upon it," he said. "We are reaching a point where if you talk to 8th or 9th graders, they won't know who Louis Armstrong is." Because of "White Christmas," however, Crosby remains in the public consciousness, he noted.

"Our job is keep (Crosby's and other music) going," McKaie said, adding that his parent company also tries to keep Crosby's film and television work marketable. "If you don't keep the artist and music viable via consistent releases, the other side of the coin suffers, because (the audience is) not familiar with his music."

Enter the International Crosby Circle, which began in England in 1950. There are smaller Crosby fan clubs, but none as prolific as the circle, which also puts out a quarterly called BING magazine. Many of the roughly 250 members of the older, mostly American Club Crosby are constituents of the circle, said Wiggins, who is in both groups. The International Crosby Circle, which Wiggins said celebrates the performer, not the man, has upped its size considerably since 1990. World-wide membership is about 750, he added. Wiggins, who never met Crosby, has been a member of the circle since 1970 and agreed to become its American representative in 1991, when the group underwent an overhaul after years of decline. With only 55 members in 1991, the circle now has 300 in the United States and Canada, Wiggins said. The group is "not just...old fogies. We are attracting younger members," he said. Responsible partly is inclusion of the club name and Wiggins' address in the Universal releases as well as a Web site called the Bing Crosby Internet Museum, created by Steven Lewis, a biology professor at Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City, Mo.

"When the BC Internet Museum was born in June 1996, there was virtually nothing about Bing or his popular culture on the Internet," said Lewis, 45, in an e-mail interview. "I saw this as a niche to be filled." Lewis's site(www.kcmetro.cc.mo.us/pennvalley/biology/lewis/crosby/bing.htm) contains more than 250 pages, 200 images and several sound files. It receives hits in the tens of thousands every month since he started keeping count in August 1996, he said.

Ryan Foster, 24, of Salem, Ore., just sent in his $20 membership to join the circle after finding Lewis' Crosby museum. "Bing seems more fun or adventurous, or however you can put that warm, amiable feeling I always get from him," Foster wrote in a letter to Wiggins in August. Although he's always known about the song "White Christmas," Foster came by another Crosby recording a few years ago through a then-girlfriend. The song was "Temptation."

"Sinatra is so big and so popular, even by today's standards, that it's nice to stick up for the underdog, someone who's persona and style is so out of step with the times," said Foster. Foster said his enthusiasm for Crosby largely goes unappreciated in Salem, but would not let that deter him from listening to the crooner. For now, Foster continues posting messages on the Intemet

site, to show Universal that he and other Crosby devotees consider it their "dream" to purchase the company's complete Crosby stash in CD form. Reality, however, dictates slow release. That doesn't stop the extremely dedicated from keeping alive the gospel of Crosby. In fact, Wiggins said the major debate in the International Crosby Circle is how to celebrate Bing's birthday centennial, May 3, 2003.

(Editor: What a great article and well done Wig ! Good to see Steven Lewis getting a nice mention too and it is probably appropriate for me to add a few more details.)

The Bing Crosby Internet Museum

This 'museum' run by Steven Lewis continues to expand and it has to be one of the most comprehensive sites of its kind on the 'net. Steven has now added 'The Diary of a Lifetime' to the site and as you examine this there are links to other parts of the site. For instance, if you click on 'Only Forever' in the diary in 1940, you are transferred to a page giving the lyrics of the song. Marvellous!

Steven himself is a Biology Instructor at Penn Valley Community College in Kansas City and from his Web site, I can now bring you a picture of the man himself.

Steven continues to be most helpful to the ICC and in recent months, he has gladly gone to his local library to research Bing's visits to Kansas City during the war. I really must stop picking on our members in the USA and asking them to do research. USA members will be frightened to write to me soon. I am still waiting to hear from someone in Texas.

Bing Doll

Bill Hunt posted a notice on the Bing Crosby Internet Museum's bulletin board in October as follows:

> *Target stores are now selling Bing Crosby, Rosemary Clooney, and Danny Kaye dolls dressed in their 'White Christmas' costumes. Only 7000 were made and the packaging is very attractive. Each is individually boxed and priced at $19.95. I think the same face was used for both Bing and Danny but if you're a Crosby fan -- gotta have it!! Only a few have gone to each store and it's a long way to Christmas so you better get them soon. The dolls can be found in Dept. 86 (girl's dolls) at Target stores only. Good luck!!*

We draw this to readers attention and hope it's not too late by the time you read this.

BOOKS 'N' BING

1. Bing Crosby - the illustrated biography

Any new book about Bing has to be enthusiastically welcomed and Michael Freedland's latest biography is a well presented glossy publication with beautifully reproduced photographs, many of which were new to me. However the book runs to only 127 pages (7.5 inches wide by 9.5 inches high) and at £14.99 it is not cheap.

The author is Michael Freedland who has written over 30 books about the world of entertainment and who frequently writes for 'The Times', 'The Guardian' and 'The Sunday Telegraph'. Sadly Michael seems to have relied heavily on 'The Hollow Man' and on Gary Crosby's book with the result that whilst Bing's tremendous achievements are highlighted, there are frequent adverse comments about him too which are slanted without full knowledge of the facts. I have to say that the book has a feel of having been dashed off quickly with little original research having been undertaken. It is riddled with the kinds of errors that will irritate the knowledgeable ones amongst us and it is frankly not acceptable in a book such as this to keep referring to Harry Barris as 'Harry Berris'. It is just too careless to tell us on page 9 that Bing sold more than 400,000 records in his lifetime. 400 million is of course the often quoted figure. The chronology of Bing's activities in 1929 to 1931 is somewhat confused and if only the author had seen our diary first. To give a few more random examples, he incorrectly states that Bing recorded 'Just One More Chance' before he left Whiteman He goes on to say that after the Woodbury series, Bing became 'the star of the Chesterfield Hour'. Does he mean the Kraft Music Hall? How about this next bit?

> "That was followed with Rhythm on the River. In this he played a songwriter, who used 'ghosts' to write his material. Always a risky subject for a man like him, who supplied a constant supply of signed newspaper articles at this time, pieces that he probably never ever saw."

Obviously the author has never seen the film or he would know that Basil Rathbone played the part described. Talking about Bing and Bob Hope we learn:-

> "Both decided they wanted an Oscar. Bing set out to get his and, as we shall see, succeeded."

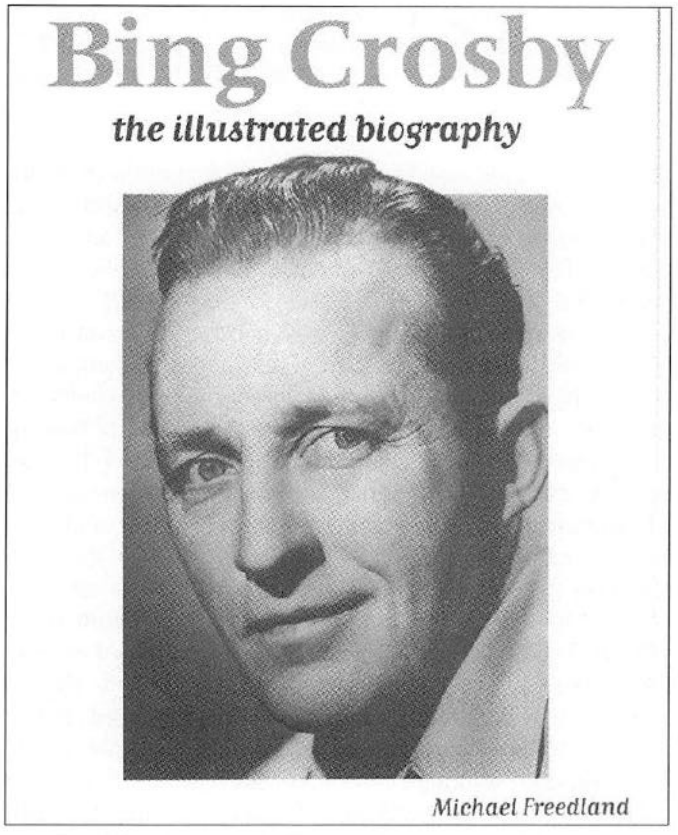
What rubbish! He talks about *Holiday Inn* and says that the filming of 'I'll Capture Your Heart ' took 36 takes. Is

there confusion with Astaire's firecracker dance in the film? You bet!

An error frequently seen elsewhere is compounded when Freedland writes that Al Jolson appeared week after week on Bing's Kraft Music Hall show. We all know that Jolie appeared on the Philco and Chesterfield shows hosted by Bing and that Bing appeared twice on Jolson's Kraft Music Hall. Hasn't Mr Freedland read his own 1972 book on Jolson lately where he did get the facts right? Mr Freedland even discovers that Bing and Bob Hope appeared together in Britain in the war and sang 'Mairzy Doats'. There is no basis in fact for this statement. In describing the 1944 Academy Awards, Freedland says:-

"Bing did not win the other Academy Award for which he was nominated that year: He was one of the first two men to be up for both the Best Actor and Best Supporting Actor prizes."

Complete confusion with Barry Fitzgerald I'm afraid.



In describing the recording of the song 'Let's Not Be Sensible' we are told:-

"So Michael Holliday, a Crosby sound-alike, was brought in to finish the line for him. "

If you don't know the facts, just make 'em up!

Unfortunately the sloppiness of his work will provide us with countless queries in the coming years from people who will take Freedland's facts as gospel. However whilst it is easy for us as Crosby experts to score cheap points as we pick out incorrect factual details, these errors will probably not matter to the casual reader. It will be Michael Freedland's opinions which will make the impact and how valid are these? We are all entitled to our opinions and naturally our own judgement of Bing will be biased in his favour. Sadly I gain the impression that Mr Freedland has been over influenced by the 'Hollow Man' stories and as a result he is often unsympathetic to Bing in the views he promotes. For instance, he says that Bing discouraged the sons of his first marriage from going into show business and he wonders whether Bing "feared the competition they might, at some distant future date, offer him?" Where does he get that from?

Of 'High Society', he says "But Crosby was virtually swamped by the rest of the cast." Well did you evah! But as I say we are all entitled to our opinions. The book ends with the following words:

> "Perhaps the most interesting questions are the most difficult to answer. What, for instance, was so special about Bing Crosby that made him so beloved by his audience and so resented by those near to him?
>
> Of course, he was a complex man - a more straightforward sort wouldn't have had those problems. But you can't, unlike so many other vital show business characters, say that he lived only for his work. If he did, it was a very closely guarded secret. He called his autobiography, written almost half a century ago, *Call Me Lucky*. He was very lucky indeed. Lucky to be blessed with a talent he would have been the first to admit was God-given. Lucky to have used that talent so wisely. Lucky to have achieved so much. But unlucky to have been unable to love so many people who wanted to love him.
>
> The luck that he did have gave him a star quality which is still undefinable. But you knew it when you heard it and you knew it when you heard Bing Crosby. Those who have it can survive almost anything. It was, as he sang, what life was all about."

The book is published by Chameleon Books, an imprint of Andre Deutsch Ltd., 76 Dean Street, London W1V 5HA (www.vci.co.uk). Any book about Bing can only help to promote interest in him so I do hope this book sells well. I think that it's a pity a bit more effort and care was not put into it but the one external review I've seen so far was favourable so in the interests of fair play, I reproduce below. It was sent in to us by Jim Byrne and it comes from an Irish newspaper.

Bing Crosby – the illustrated biography by Michael Freedland. Published by Chameleon. £14.99

BING Crosby was the king of crooners in a halycon period when easy listenin' music topped the charts and the up-tempo concept of shake, rattle and roll was still a long way off.

The little man with the soft velvet voice and drowsy smile became a legend, if only for his classic recording of White Christmas, which was one of the highest selling singles ever.

Bing, who came from an Irish-American background, was just as accomplished a movie actor as he was a singer, and the Crosby public personna even extended to being a comedian, and a golfer of no mean standard.

Indeed, he died as he would have wanted to – on the golf course.

Author Michael Freedland uses new material, original interviews and rare photographs to present this illuminating insight into a highly emotive singing star who was also a highly complex character.

The Bing Crosby voice was nostalgia and his frequent sparring partner Bob Hope paid him the ultimate compliment of stating that he thought Bing had the greatest voice of all time.

Freedland observes that this was saying something.

"There were better popular singers, who worked and projected voices that could shake a Broadway theatre without the help of a microphone.

"And certainly few opera buffs would agree with this assessment. But you have to say that in a world where style was ever-important, Bing – his real name was Harry Lillis Crosby – had in spades.

"For 40 years, from the time Al Jolson gave up his throne as king of show business to the era when Frank Sinatra was incontestably the monarch, Bing Crosby was popular music."

His renderings of Where The Blue Of The Night Meets The Gold Of The Day, Dear Hearts And Gentle People, and, of course, White Christmas were vintage Crosby in a golden era of song and the silver screen.

This 130-page heavily illustrated book is a light, highly entertaining read, weaving its way from Bing's strict Roman Catholic family background in Tacoma, Washington, in the far west of the United States, to his glittering singing and acting career in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s on Broadway, and in Hollywood.

ON THE ROAD: Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour and Bing Crosby

Michael Freedland concedes that it has become fashionable to portray Bing as a vicious, unfeeling abuser of his children: a martinet, a drunk, a bully.

But he says: "None of that fits with the image that made Crosby the outstanding entertainer of his day."

Freedland adds: "The man who sold more records than any human being ever before had a voice like no other. Yet he would never recognise it as anything special – until he worked out how much money and fame it brought him. Indeed, he was, at first hearing, quite an ordinary voice.

He was baritone with a gift to make a simple song sound as though it were recorded through pure silk."

● *Billy Kennedy*

2. Bob Hope - An Illustrated Biography

This book too is by Michael Freedland and it has also just been published by Chameleon Books. Exactly the same format of the book about Bing, it has 127 pages and some great photographs, including seven with Bing. Mr Freedland's inspiration for this effort seems to have been the notorious Arthur Marx book 'The Secret Life of Bob Hope' and also an interview with writer Mel Shavelson. Again a lack of depth and balance is evident with Bob Hope's alleged greed and his morals receiving frequent comment. The errors grate on me and here is a prime example when talking about the London Palladium.

> He appeared there at Royal Variety Shows, too. At one, he and Judy Garland did an act together.
> "I'm serious, Bob," said Judy. " I have quite a problem and I want to ask you a big favour."
> "Well sure, Jude. What is it?"
> "Well, I know you're with Paramount, Bob, but I'm making a musical for MGM and I need a new leading man. He must be very good looking, tremendously talented, have loads of appeal to women. So naturally, I thought of you."
> "Well, gee thanks," said Bob, salivating.
> "Yes," she said. "I'm sure you could recommend someone."
> Then insult was piled on injury. Her choice had narrowed to two men - Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra.
> "Well," he said, "that's one and a half men, and I'm not sure which is the half."
> To help him out, Bing appeared from the wings and Hope and Crosby were together again with a new leading lady in the middle.

So, Mr. Freedland is stating quite definitely that Bing appeared on a Royal Variety Show. Well, we know that he didn't and in fact the dialogue comes from the Command Performance show recorded in Los Angeles on June 3, 1944. Has he really jumped to the conclusion that Command Performance was the Royal Variety Show? Amazing for a writer of his experience. He says that Bing and Bob were both in the show 'Ballyhoo of 1932' and then Bing went off to Hollywood to appear in 'The Big Broadcast'. Incorrect but people will believe it and I really should have expected more thoroughness. So presumably the facts about Bob Hope cannot be relied upon either? Again the price is £14.99 and you might like to wait to pick this one up at the bargain book sellers in a year or two.

3. Bing Crosby in the 50's

Gary Hamann's latest book was mentioned by Wig in our last issue and since then my copy has arrived. Again in A4 size, the book runs to 110 pages and is packed with information about Bing's activities during what was for him something of a mid-life crisis. The death of Dixie, the problems with his sons and then his eventual remarriage are all covered with photocopies of newspaper items adding to the text. As you can imagine, the mass of facts was particularly fascinating to me as it added much new detail to the diary of Bing's life which I maintain on computer. An interesting little story which will be of interest to fans of the 'Carry On' films and followers of the soap 'Eastenders' was that dated March 15, 1957

> *"Gary Crosby is hoping Papa Bing will fly to Europe in the spring. He wants him to meet pouty mouth 19 year-old Barbara Windsor whom he met during his recent furlough in London. On second thought, he might marry her before Bing comes over..."*

Another report described Barbara as a dark-eyed brunette and quite attractive. It must be the same Barbara Windsor that we know so well. Anyone know Barbara well enough to ask her for her recollections of Gary Crosby?

This is a most interesting book and since it is a limited edition, don't delay if you want it. Contact either Wig or Michael Crampton as soon as possible to place your order.

4. Bing Crosby's Last Song

Just in case you come across this book, this is not about Bing but is a work of fiction by Lester Goran set in the Irish community of Pittsburgh in 1968. It is the story of one's man's discovery of the importance of what he sees disappearing from this world. The Amazon review on the Internet states: "Full of bar room lore, hard-bitten wisdom, gentle humor, and faith tempered by skepticism, BING CROSBY'S LAST SONG is a hilarious and touching story of love, a community's demise, and a wanderer's rebirth."

TRADING POST

Entries are free for all items of Crosbyana and there is a nominal charge of £2 for non-Crosby advertisements. All items are printed in good faith and we cannot accept responsibility for any dissatisfaction arising from the transaction as a result of these entries
Please send all advertisements to the Editor

Festival Films "Surprise Package"

A new video tape in PAL format (i.e. playable in the UK) has been produced featuring the following material:
Perry Como's Kraft Music Hall - March 17, 1960 - segment including Bing
Wayne and Shuster Take a Look at Bing Crosby and Bob Hope - an hour long TV show from 1966 including such rarities as the golfing routine from 'Variety Girl'.
Person to Person - Ed Murrow interviews Bing in his home in 1954.
Golfing with Bing and Bob plus the short films 'Don't Hook Now' and 'Honor Caddie'.

All of this for £17 (post-paid in the UK). Running time is 115 minutes. Limited supplies only. Send cheques payable to **R. Dixon Smith,** 58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE

Peter Haizelden, Brunswick House, 12 Park Lane, Long Sutton, Lincs PE12 9DH (tel 01406-364001)

BING COLLECTION FOR SALE 2089 10" and 12" 78's; 105 test and master pressings, V-Discs, Treasury and Paramount Radio recordings; 21 16" transcriptions; 54 78rpm albums; 273 45's; 11 45rpm box sets; 122 EP's; 8 EP sets; 8-track cassettes; 101 10" LP's; 595 12" LP's; 27 LP box sets; 577 sheet music and folios; 106 framed film posters, adverts etc; 326 film stills, lobby cards and stills; 60 publicity and portrait photos; ephemera - film press books and programmes, cigarette and trade cards, etc; collectables - autographed Bing handkerchief, record cleaners, ICC car badge, videos, video disc, cassettes etc. Write initially, with s.a.e, stating your field of interest and if PC user.

Joe Cain, 91 Cross Lane, Prescot, Merseyside L35 3QH

Bing clocks for sale £10 + £2 p.p.. Overseas postage to be arranged. Address labels with colour pictures of Bing next to address, 21 per sheet. £2.50 or two sheets for £4.50. Bing note cards, four per set plus envelopes £2.50 or two sets for £4.50. For more details and samples send SAE.

Bert Minister, 80 Fox St., Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9JY (tel no. 0161-480-0722)

"I have a Bing Crosby collection for sale and wondered if you know anyone who may be interested:-
Some 200 LPs, some 200 cassette tapes, radio shows etc., a few open reel tapes of Bing, plus books and back copies of Bing fanzines going back to the days of Reg Bristo and Frank Murphy.
I would prefer to sell the lot as one job lot at a very reasonable price which would then allow for a resale of individual items at a higher price if anyone was interested in taking the option on this."

Kathy Fisher, 29 Blvd. Notre Dame East, Rock Island, Quebec, Canada J0B 2K0 (e-mail:- gofish@interlinx.qc.ca)

LOOKING FOR:

'My Life With Bing' by Kathryn Crosby; 'The Hollow Man' by Donald Shepherd and Robert Slatzer; 'Bing - Just For The Record' by Bert Bishop and John Bassett; 'The Fabulous Life of Bing Crosby' by George Carpozi; 'Going My Own Way' by Gary Crosby; 'The Crosby Years' by Ken Barnes.
Contact Kathy direct if you can hep her.

Paul Dombroski, P.O. Box 64, Shamokin PA 17872, USA (e-mail:- paulbros@mail.csrlink.net)

Paul is having to sell his late uncle's huge Bing collection. His uncle also collected big band music, soundtracks, radio shows and many other vocalists. As regards the Bing content, there are 45 rpm box sets, hundreds of LPs, 78s and 45s plus 10" discs and books. Contact Paul direct for details.

Bert Bishop, Tideway, 100 Imperial Avenue, Maylandsea, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 6AJ

"WANTED Clean copy, with cover of 'Bing - Just for the Record'. Your price paid."

Malcolm Macfarlane, 3 Osborne Close, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 2EE

WANTED Books 'The Incredible Crosby' by Barry Ulanov, and 'Bing Crosby and The Bing Crosby Style' by Dr J.T.H.Mize. I'll get my wife to buy them for me for Christmas!

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Crosby Clubs Around The World

The ICC is pleased to be associated with the following Crosby organisations.

Bing Crosby Internet Museum:
www.kcmetro.cc.mo.us/~crosby/

Bing's Friends And Collectors Society,
Hobie and Cathie Wilson, 236 Andrieux St., Sonoma, California 95476-6909, USA (tel. 707 996 0257 - E-mail Mailcrosby@aol.com - Web Site address http://members.aol.com/CrosbyPage/crosbypageindex.html)

Club Crosby, BINGANG
Wayne L. Martin, Editor
435 So. Holmes Ave., Kirkwood, Missouri 63122, USA
(E-mail: ClubCrosby@aol.com)
(Members in Europe should enrol via Ken Crossland, 9 Arden Drive, Dorridge, Solihull, B93 8LP)

The Queensland Bing Crosby Society,
John Wright, 17 Thurecht Parade, Scarborough, Queensland 4020, Australia

The Victorian Bing Crosby Society
Bob Neate, 22 Pakenham St., Blackburn, Victoria, Australia 3130.

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OTHER APPRECIATION SOCIETIES

We have reciprocal arrangements with the following clubs and societies for publicity purposes. They kindly advertise our club in their magazines and we are very pleased to return the favour.

Sinatra Music Society, 183 Summerfields Avenue, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 9NU
This Society produces a most impressive magazine on a bi-monthly basis. The magazine includes features on all artistes performing quality popular music. The annual sub for UK members is £10 and write to Des Davis at the above address for details.

Sinatra Music Society, Dublin Branch, c/o Chris Hitchcock, 21 Roselawn Walk, Dublin 15, Ireland (phone: 01 8212418)

Tony Bennett Appreciation Society, c/o Mark Fox, 13 Sunnyside, Heckmondwike, W. Yorks WF16 0LN

Pat Boone Appreciation Society, P. O. Box 63, Sunderland, SR1 1PN

The International Petula Clark Society, c/o Terry Young, 38 Elmley Way, Margate, Kent CT9 4ES

Alma Cogan Appreciation Society, c/o Stephen Woods, 9 Canterbury Avenue, Bowerham, Lancaster LA1 4AU

The Sammy Davis Jr Association, c/o Paul Iacovou, 6 Thyra Grove, North Finchley, London N12 8HB

The Doris Day Society, 31 Kirkfield Rise, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 9DX

The Judy Garland Club c/o Anthony R. Scarrott, Flat 3, 25 Holland Rd., Hove, East Sussex BN3 1JF

The Al Jolson Society, c/o Richard Selwood, 5 Abbotsfield, Wiveliscombe, Somerset TA4 2SU

Frankie Laine International Appreciation Society, c/o Tony Cooper, 18 Napier Crescent, Seamer, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 4HY

International Friends of Gordon Macrae, c/o Mrs. Pat Robinson, 47 Lea Mill Park Drive, Yeaden, Leeds LS19 7YH

The Dean Martin Association, P. O. Box 80, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1ZR

Guy Mitchell Appreciation Society, 11 Kierhill Rd., Balloch, Cumbernauld, Glasgow G68 9BH

Seen in the Chicago Tribune of July 1, 1998

KEITH PARKINSON'S
CELLULOID CROSBY

In issues 117 and 119 of BING the two major Crosby-Sinatra films were examined. Both *High Society* (1956) and *Robin and the 7 Hoods* (1964) came towards the end of Bing's golden years in the movies but embraced Sinatra's cinematic peak. The first film linking the two came much earlier, however. In 1942 Sinatra achieved his ambition to meet the man who inspired him to become a vocalist, face to face on the set of a Paramount picture. Sinatra had journeyed to Hollywood to appear in the M-G-M film *Ship Ahoy*. It was still early days as far as Sinatra's show business career was concerned and his part in the picture was as a singer with Tommy Dorsey's orchestra. He had yet to flex his acting muscles. At one stage trumpeter Yank Lawson had worked with Dorsey and for part of that time Sinatra was the "boy singer' with the band. Lawson established a friendship with the singer whilst they were on the road. When Lawson moved on to work with Bing's brother Bob, Sinatra kept in touch. Lawson recalled: "We were doing the music for *Holiday Inn* and he (Sinatra) asked me if he could go out and the see the filming. He wanted to watch Bing work, because Bing was his idol. Crosby was the big star of that time and Sinatra was still just the singer with the band. Frank met me out at the Paramount lot and I took him in. He just loved it, watching Bing."

Sinatra soon caught the ear of the nation and would shortly have his regular weekly show on radio. He eventually hosted *Your Hit Parade,* a programme devoted to America's top songs. The best selling tunes were not always suited to his vocal style, but from his debut on the programme he took a crack at two or three numbers each week. Eventually someone decided to tabulate the songs featured during the run of the show and "White Christmas" came out top for most frequent plays, boosted by its initial popularity in the film *Holiday Inn* in 1942. It was, of course, a perennial best seller and enjoyed chart success for many Christmases. For the record, second and third places were taken by "People Will Say We're in Love" and "Harbour Lights". Bing's Decca recordings of both numbers made a major contribution towards their popularity.

Publicity surrounding the making of *Holiday Inn* made reference to Irving Berlin writing thirteen new songs for the film. However "White Christmas" was apparently written a few years earlier because Berlin was reported as attempting to place it in the Astaire-Rogers musical *Top Hat* which was shot in 1935. Bing introduced the song on a Kraft Music Hall programme some eight months before the *Holiday Inn* premiere. In addition, both "Lazy"

Producer Mark Sandrich sits in the middle of the stars of 'Holiday Inn'

and "Easter Parade" were written by Berlin before he was assigned to write the songs for *Holiday Inn*. "White Christmas" became a film in its own right in 1954 when Paramount made it their first Vista Vision production. Robert Emmett Dolan was producer on the later effort, a fair step up from the musical director credit he had on *Holiday Inn*. Also involved on both productions were a quintet of behind the scenes stalwarts from Paramount. Ronald Anderson, Joseph J. Lilley, Edith Head, Wally Westmore and John Cope took care of art direction, vocal arrangements, gowns, make up and sound recording respectively. Irving Berlin wrote the complete score for the 1954 film as well. He did manage to recycle one other number in addition to 'White Christmas'. That was "Abraham" which was danced by Vera Ellen in the 1954 Technicolor film as opposed to being sung by Bing, Marjorie Reynolds (dubbed by Martha Mears), Louise Beavers, Joan Arnold and Shelby Bacon in *Holiday Inn*.

When casting the female leads producer-director Mark Sandrich wanted to secure an actress who could hold her own as a vocalist and Mary Martin seemed ideal casting until pregnancy intervened. (Larry Hagman was the eventual offspring.) Rita Hayworth and Dale Evans were also considered for the part eventually played by Marjorie Reynolds. Hayworth couldn't sing but Evans thought she had a singing voice. Ironically the non-singing Reynolds had her voice dubbed by the aforementioned Miss Mears who provided the singing voice for Rita Hayworth in several Columbia pictures. As for Dale Evans, her visit to Hollywood wasn't wasted. She stayed on, met and married Roy Rogers and enjoyed over half a century of domestic bliss with the singing cowboy until his death earlier this year.

Shooting through the winter of 1941/42 the film was sneak previewed in July and readied for a premiere in August of 1942 with Crosby waxing ten Decca sides of songs from the picture in May of that year. *Holiday Inn* contained enough musical goodies of a seasonal nature to spread sizeable royalties throughout the years for Berlin and Crosby never to be concerned with making pension provisions. In the 1940s, even first run cinemas offered double bills and full supporting programmes. Quite often a stage show was thrown in as well, though not in the case of *Holiday Inn*. In the States the Paramount circuit played *Holiday Inn* with an animated "Superman" short and a "B" picture. The latter was *I Live on Danger,* a Pine-Thomas thriller starring Chester Morris and Jean Parker. A typical Pine-Thomas actioner, it was about a radio reporter looking for a news item and becoming embroiled in a murder plot. Paramount had a deal with William Pine and William Thomas which required the pair to produce low cost product for Paramount to place on double bills. In fact the two producers were known as 'The Double Bills'. They were not known to lavish money on production values, which accounts for their other nickname: "The Dollar Bills". Their business relationship with Paramount lasted until the late fifties and their output holds little appeal today.

If financial success and longevity are themselves a measure of a film's worth then *Holiday Inn* must be very near the top of the Crosby filmography. It broke all previous records at cinema box-offices during its first run of Paramount theatres. Paramount also stated that it doubled the gross of any previous Crosby film. It made "Variety's" list of top twenty money making films of 1941/42. It was the first Bing picture to register in the UK box office top ten where it took 5th place in 1942. It enjoyed a major reissue in 1949 in the USA This was seven years after its' first showings and was in line with Hollywood's tried and tested policy of reviving popular features after such a time lapse. The view was that the film would not be old enough to seem dated, its original audience would return to the cinema to relive a happy viewing experience and an entirely new cinema audience would have grown up and be ready to view big screen hits of a few years earlier. The seven year rule still holds good for one studio despite the competition from satellite and terrestrial television sales coupled with video sell through and rental. The Disney organisation dusts off product every seven years or so and earns big bucks at the box-office. Despite video availability, *Snow White, Peter Pan* and other animated classics still enthral on the big screen. And if you look around the theatres the kids are invariably accompanied by more mature viewers who got a kick out of the presentation the first time around.

This is a good opportunity to assess Bing's appeal to the under 12s. I saw a couple of *Road* pictures and some Sennett shorts whilst 1 was still at junior school and I seem to recall they were worth my sixpence despite the songs! But a young audience generally goes for action and laughter. Until the mid - 1960s, when television took over the duty of Saturday morning entertainment, many under twelves went to cinema club matinees. This consisted of a two-hour programme mix of a serial, cartoon, general interest and main feature. The latter was almost always a western until the end of the 1950s. By then, the source of supply of this type of film had dried up. The Hollywood studios had stopped making these sixty minute oaters for cinema presentation and had transferred production to the weekly television series. *The Lone Ranger, Maverick, The Cisco Kid, Cheyenne and Davy Crockett* had replaced Hopalong Cassidy, Lash Larue and The Durango Kid on the studio backlots. Deprived of this staple ingredient of children's entertainment the Childrens' Film Foundation attempted to plug the gap with a series of films produced for a young audience. The output of the CFF could not meet the demand for 52 different films each year and the Saturday morning cinema exhibitors were forced to look elsewhere for product. Thus a bold experiment by the ABC circuit in 1962. For their Saturday morning matinee they showed *High Society* to the ABC Minors audience in selected cinemas. The kids found it a boring experience and disorderly behaviour resulted. After all, an audience with an average age of eight would be hard pressed to be riveted by a story involving a load of unexceptional adults standing around talking and singing sophisticatedly about who is going to marry a wealthy Philadelphian socialite. And for two hours at that. Didn't the cinema managers remember that even Roy Rogers couldn't hold his audience when the cowboy serenaded Dale and Trigger?

It is easy to be taken in by the studio publicity surrounding the release of a film. The grass roots' reactions are more significant in the long term. In the USA independent exhibitors filed their appraisals when films started their provincial runs. This was usually a few months after the super cinemas in the big cities had played to capacity audiences. In the 1940s it was not difficult to fill a 3,000 seat auditorium for evening performances. One report from the sticks was submitted by E.A. Seaggs, manager of the Lincoln Theatre in Robinson, Illinois. *Holiday Inn* played at his cinema from Wednesday to Saturday, September 23-26th, 1942. He wrote:

"One of the best song and dance productions ever made. Played four days where our usual run is two days. Business picked up each day with several coming back to see it twice. (I saw it three times myself). Although neither Crosby nor Astaire has ever won the Academy Award for acting, they do swell in parts where their entertaining ability means more than acting. Keep an eye on Virginia Dale. She's going places if she gets a chance. Book this for extended playing time. You won't be sorry.

P. S. Paramount missed a bet by not having it in Technicolor. "

This is from a hard-nosed businessman who is so impressed with the movie he watches it on three occasions. Bing had to wait a couple of years for his Oscar but Berlin won one for the best film song of 1942 - "White Christmas". As for E.A.'s prediction about Virginia Dale, she obviously didn't get the chance he thought she deserved. After impressing as Astaire's dancing partner in *Holiday Inn* she slipped back from whence she came: B films. She called it quits with show business in 1951 whilst still in her early thirties. As to whether or not Technicolor would have given *Holiday Inn* more box-office appeal, this is doubtful. Anyhow, Technicolor stock was rationed during the war years and Paramount did not have access to the process without denying another production its apparent benefit.

And reaction from the sticks in the U.K ? In 1993 the attendance figures for the Majestic cinema in Macclesfield were discovered. They revealed that the most popular film show there in 1943 was *Holiday Inn*. The North of England audiences had wide ranging tastes, which is why Frank Randle in *Somewhere on Leave* was in second place!

Keith Parkinson

THE A-Z OF BING'S MOVIES

INCURABLY ROMANTIC Song. In *Let's Make Love* (1960) Yves Montand fancies Marilyn Monroe. To win her over he seeks to expand his skills as a singer, dancer and comedian by receiving tuition from only the top performers in their field. A singing lesson is given by Bing, Milton Berle teaches comic delivery and Gene Kelly the art of the dance. For Montand's vocal efforts the song selected is "Incurably Romantic", written for the movie by Sammy Cahn and James Van Heusen. Some of the Crosby vocal magic must have rubbed off because by the film's end Montand and Monroe are a twosome. As it happens Bing was already working at Twentieth Century-Fox filming *High Time* and probably knocked off this other Fox assignment during his lunch hour.

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

Song. There is a seasonal interlude in *High Time* (1960) where Bing sings this 19th Century carol together with one of his tutors, played by Nicole Maurey, and his fellow students, one of whom was Fabian. Bing's vocal companions have rarely been as unsuited. Composer credits for the song are the Reverend Edmund Hamilton Sears (words) and Richard Storrs Willis (music). A couple of years after *High Time* Bing included it on his penultimate Christmas album.

IT MUST BE TRUE Song. It was more than ten years before *Dixie* that Bing first sang in black face. Accidentally having his face painted in the Mack Sennett short *Dream House* (1932) he was engaged as a negro for the film within a film. This results in him singing "It must be true" to leading lady Ann Christy. Gordon Clifford provided lyrics to a collaboration between band leader Gus Arnheim and ex-Rhythm Boy Harry Barris. Bing rated the song highly and recorded it three times. The sequence from *Dream House* involving the song was used in 1946 as part of the *Road to Hollywood* compilation.

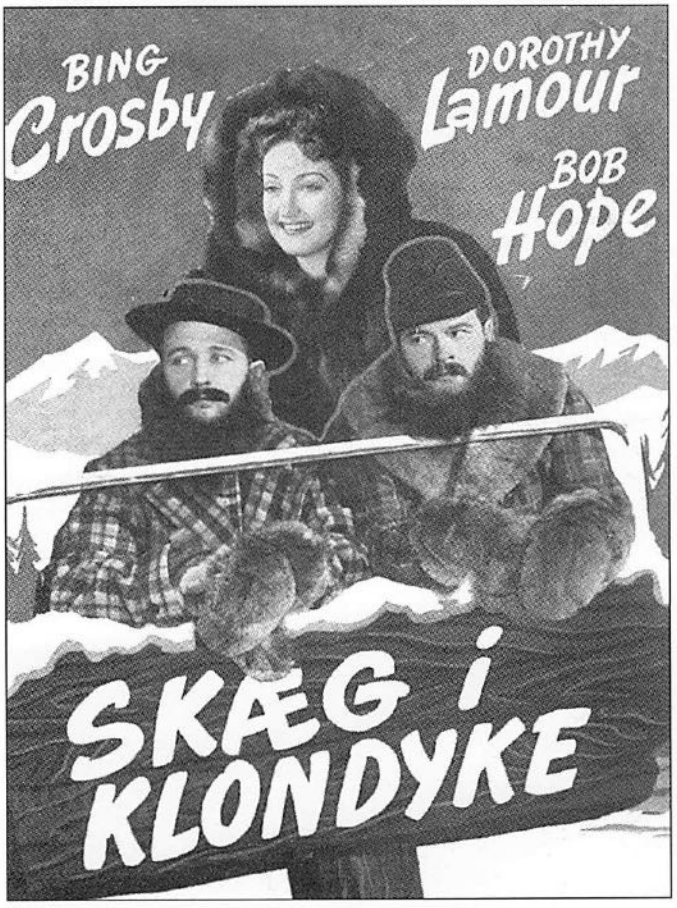
IT'S ALWAYS YOU Song. Johnny Burke and James Van Heusen always came up with one big romantic ballad when they received a Crosby picture assignment. For *Road to Zanzibar* they wrote "It's Always You" and Bing sang it beautifully to Dorothy Lamour as he paddled down the river in a canoe with her as his sole companion. A few scenes later on it would seem that Dottie had been killed and Bob Hope joins Bing in a sad reprise of the song only to find that all is well as Mss Lamour adds her voice to the duet.

IT'S ANYBODY'S SPRING Song. For *Road to Utopia* the romantic Crosby ballads from Burke and Van Heusen were "Sunday, Monday or Always" and "Welcome to my Dream". However, "It's Anybody's Spring" remains in the memory because of the comedy sequence where Bing sings accompanied by Bob Hope on accordion. The two perform the song in the hope of winning ten dollars in a talent contest but lose out to a monkey.

IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE CHRISTMAS

Song. Not featured in a Crosby film but used on the soundtrack of *A Christmas Story* (1983). A charming, nostalgic film set in the 1940s, it makes use of three of Bing's Decca Christmas songs. (The other two are "Jingle Bells" and "Santa Claus is Coming to Town"). If *A Christmas Story* turns up on the box during the festive season watch it. No schmaltz - just a look at how we like to think Christmases used to be.

IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER Song. Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart only wrote songs for one Crosby picture but they provided him with three songs that stand head and shoulders above typical film scores of the time. In addition to "It's Easy to Remember", they gave him "Soon" and "Down by



A Danish advert for `Road to Utopia` which has been kindly supplied by member Bertel Dueholm

the River" to sing in *Mississippi* (1935). Bing plays Tom Grayson, a performer in a group of travelling players in the film. When the troupe put on a show Bing sings this song. It was a production afterthought. Rodgers and Hart had returned to New York when Paramount asked for another song. They felt the audience would feel short changed unless Bing could deliver four songs in the picture. The writers obliged, recorded a demo and mailed it to California. It all sounds as easy as Bing's effortless delivery of "It's Easy to Remember". For the record, the fourth Crosby song in *Mississippi* was the Stephen Foster composed "Swanee River".

IT'S MINE, IT'S YOURS Song. Written by Ira Gershwin and Harold Arlen for *The Country Girl* (1954), this is typical of the material Bing had to work with in a film calling for him to pull out all the stops on his dramatic skills. The song provides our first opportunity to hear Bing sing in the film. He performs it at an audition for a part in a Broadway show. He gets the job, in case you wondered.

IT'S THE NATURAL THING TO DO

Song. This is the one Paramount wanted the audience to whistle after they left the cinema having seen *Double or Nothing* (1937). Written by Johnny Burke and Arthur Johnston, Bing sings it to Mary Carlisle half way through the film. Then, as the usual happy ending unfolds, Bing gives it another shot.

IT'S THE NATURAL THING TO DO

Cartoon. Paramount released the Popeye cartoons and the studio thought nothing of asking animator Dave Fleisher to build a ten minute short around one of their properties. The cartoon was named after the song and was released in 1937 to capitalise on the publicity surrounding *Double or Nothing*. The short opens with Olive Oyl in the kitchen whilst Popeye and arch enemy Bluto battle it out in the back yard. A telegram arrives from the Popeye fan club reading: "Cut out the rough stuff and act more refined. It's the natural thing to do." The two characters make an effort to reform but the film ends with them brawling once again as "It's the Natural Thing to do" is heard on the soundtrack.

I'VE GOT A POCKETFUL OF DREAMS

Song. This jaunty number is the first featured song written by Johnny Burke and James V. Monaco for Paramount's *Sing You Sinners* (1938). In the film, when the singing Beebe Brothers launch their night-club act Bing receives vocal assistance from "brothers" Donald O'Connor and Fred MacMurray. When a permanent job results they reprise the number later in the film with their mother, played by Elizabeth Patterson, joining in. Fame and fortune follow and the film ends with the three brothers giving the song another performance.

I'VE GOT FIVE DOLLARS Song. Although I stated above that Rodgers and Hart only wrote the score for one Crosby picture, he used just one more of their songs in a film. He sang "I've Got Five Dollars" in *The Big Broadcast* (1932), three years before he starred in *Mississippi*. We hear a few lines of the song duetted with Stuart Erwin in a scene set in a radio studio. Twenty five years later Bing recorded the song for Verve records.

I'VE GOT MY CAPTAIN WORKING FOR ME NOW

Song. Like all the songs in *Blue Skies* (1946) this was written by Irving Berlin. A flashback early on in the film shows Bing and Billy de Wolfe performing the number in a night-club setting.

I'VE GOT PLENTY TO BE THANKFUL FOR

Song. Another one from the pen of Irving Berlin, it was featured in *Holiday Inn* (1942). Together with the other songs in the film it was linked to a public holiday, this one being Thanksgiving Day. Towards the end of the film Bing is in a pensive mood. He plays a recording he has made of "I've Got Plenty to be Thankful For", making his mood even blacker by interjecting remarks as he listens to his own voice.

JAGGER, DEAN (1903-1991) Actor. In *White Christmas* (1954) the song "The Old Man" is sung by Bing and Danny Kaye at the start and finish of the picture. The action is separated by ten years but the "old man" is the same - General Waverly, played by Dean Jagger. It was Jagger's sole Crosby film and came midway between two films of the fifties for which he is best remembered. The first was *Twelve O'clock High* (1950) for which he won an Academy Award as best supporting actor. The other was *King Creole* (1958), when he played Elvis Presley's father. Jagger always looked older than his years because of his lack of hair and serious demeanour, but he never lacked film work and was on screen for fifty years following his debut in The *Woman from Hell* in 1929.

JEAN, GLORIA (1926-) Actress whose real name was Gloria Jean Schoonover. Her only Bing-pic was *If I Had My Way* (1940). She was the film's "leading lady", albeit juvenile lead as the fifteen year old orphan helped by Bing. It was one of those films made for Universal outside Crosby's Paramount contract. Gloria Jean has her own song in the film - "Little Grey Home in the West" - as well as duetting with Bing on a couple of Burke - Van Heusen numbers. This was good going for someone who was only making her second film appearance. Her screen prominence is explained by the fact that Universal had signed her the previous year to be groomed as a

replacement for Deanna Durbin should that adolescent studio money spinner quit, defect or lose her charm. In fact Miss D's popularity remained strong and Gloria Jean never got the parts. She was in the W. C. Fields' starrer *Never Give a Sucker an Even Break* the year after *If Had My Way* but the films which followed say it all by their long forgotten titles: *Get Hep to Love* (1942), *Mister Big* (1943), *Ghost Catchers* (1944) and so on through to *There's a Girl in my Heart* (1950). By then it was apparent that she wasn't going to make that difficult transition to adult roles and only three more films followed, the last being *The Madcaps (1963).* At the age of forty, show business was behind her and she gained employment as a switchboard operator.

JEANMAIRE, ZIZI (1924-) More of a dancer than an actress or singer, she took a crack at all three in her only Crosby film, *Anything Goes* (1956). It was an OK performance in an OK film. Billed over Mitzi Gaynor on the film's credits she played Gaby Duval, a dancer who so impresses Donald O'Connor that he brings her from Paris to New York in order to star with Bing in a Broadway musical. The complication is that Bing has already seen Mitzi Gaynor in London and offered her the same deal. Audiences heard her sing "I Get a Kick Out of You" and saw her dance in a ballet sequence but her screen impact was no more impressive than the film itself. It was her second Hollywood film, the first being *Hans Christian Andersen* (1952). After *Anything Goes* it was home to France and a couple more films before calling it quits.

JENKINS, ALLEN (Alfred McConegal) (1900-1974) Character actor. He appeared in about 175 supporting parts, one of which was in *Robin and the 7 Hoods* (1964). He was the hood called Vermin. It was a role he could play blindfold after being typecast as a thick, small-time hoodlum in just about every Warner Bros. gangster film of the 1930s. He was as essential as Bogart, Raft or Cagney in such as *Dead End* (1937), *Brother Orchid* (1940) and *Lady on a Train* (1945). But like all good character actors of that period we took him for granted and, although we recognised his face, his name on the cast list was meaningless. A film hood to the end, that's the last part he took in the remake of *The Front Page* (1974).

Gloria Jean and Bing record the songs from 'If I Had My Way'.

One Sweet Letter From You

Members' views, opinions and comments are always welcomed and we have great pleasure in reproducing some of the letters received since the last issue

Gary Giddins, New York, USA
I expect to have the book finished by December - I better, because the publisher is planning to bring it out in the fall of '99. It's going a bit faster but I grieve at not being able to use much of my research, which is really of no interest to anyone except diehard enthusiasts like us.

My Bing references have become a kind of a joke. I spent a few years writing my jazz opus, which Oxford brought out in September. It's big (about 700 pages) and we are very excited about it. In any case, there is no chapter on Bing, yet because just about everything under the sun reminds me of him, he keeps turning up - to the point where the indexer and a proof reader commented on it. The book is called Visions of Jazz: The First Century and runs the gamut from Bert Williams and Jolson to the best hopes of the '90s. Blue Note Records is issuing a two-CD set of selections in the book. Wish me luck.

Let me reiterate how infinitely grateful I am to Bing: A Diary of a Lifetime, one of the great reference works of its kind. I see my book and yours as entirely complementary, offering very different kinds of details. Incidentally, I suspect my work on his childhood and vaudeville tours will surprise people; it was by far the most exhausting part of the project, but I found a great deal of material. Bing had a dark and complicated side but as I told my editor, my biggest scoop is that he was a lot more like everyone thought when he was alive than in the years since his death, when his reputation has been ignorantly dragged through the mud. That will change.
(Editor: This is great news and we look forward to Gary's book on Bing. How nice to have confirmation that Bing was far more like his image than as was suggested by 'The Hollow Man' book. Incidentally, I have told Gary that we should be delighted to publish the fruits of his research which he has not been able to fit into his book.)

Gord Atkinson, Ontario, Canada
Thank you very much for the thoughtful mention of us in your Spring editorial. It was another excellent edition of BING with remarkable content and photos. The colour pictures, front and back, are wonderful keepsakes. Congratulations!

In your editorial you suggested that we should make plans now to observe the 100th anniversary of Bing's birth. This may be a very effective way of bringing Bing's name into the limelight of the 21st century. The present day media have either forgotten him, or are ignorant of his rightful place as the most popular entertainer of the 20th. century. The death of Frank Sinatra obliterated Bing's memory as the media acclaimed Sinatra as "the singer of the century". This reaction by the press prompted my reply to an editorial in the Ottawa Citizen, which is enclosed.

I believe the focal point for the centennial of Bing's birthday should be at Gonzaga. Beyond the campus, pressure should be exerted on the governments of Spokane, Tacoma and the state of Washington to give Bing the honour he so richly deserves. Washington State should follow the example of Oklahoma, which proclaims their state as "The Native State of Will Rogers". Bing deserves the same treatment from his home state. While the Crosby statue and Crosby Library at Gonzaga would be the obvious location for international celebrations, regional gatherings could take place at many locations around the world. I would certainly consider organizing a Canadian celebration.
(Editor: Yes, Gonzaga would seem to be the place for the centennial celebrations and I have therefore written to Stephanie Edwards seeking the views of the University authorities.)

Jon Oye, e-mail:- oye@leapnet.com
I have in my possession two Bing-related records about which I know very little. In fact, I can find nothing about them in "Diary of a Lifetime", Fred Reynolds' 5-volume "Crosby Years" or Osterholm's "Bio-bibliography". I thought perhaps you would be interested in these items for possible inclusion in a future edition of "Diary", if any information on them, beyond what little I know, can be obtained.

These records were each apparently produced for the purpose of promoting tourism to the U. S. States of Minnesota and Oregon. The titles are "The Vacation Road to Minnesota" and "Holiday In Oregon". I have very few clues as to the dates of issue, although my guess is that it was probably in the mid- to late 1960's, as Reynolds mentions in vol. 5 that Bing was involved in a ca.1965 release having to do with promoting tourism to Washington State. Also, on "Minnesota", which features Bob Hope alongside Bing, "The Road to Hong Kong" is mentioned, as are the Minnesota Twins baseball team and the Vikings football team, both of which came into existence in 1961. On the "Oregon" record, the statement "back in 1959" is made.

Bing sings no songs on either of these discs. He and Bob perform a sort of skit to extol the virtues of Minnesota, and Bing merely shares guest narrator duties with the likes of Mel Blanc and others on "Oregon". I don't have any record label info with me at this time (I'm at work now), but I can supply it for you if you desire it. As always, I thoroughly enjoyed the Summer issue of BING magazine,

and I greatly value the Herculean efforts you and your staff consistently put forth, as does good old Wig, Stateside!
(Editor: I have very little definite information about the records Jon mentions. Can anyone help us with more data?)

Keith Parkinson, Meadowcroft, Houghtons Lane, Eccleston, St. Helens WA10 5LD
Every issue of BING has its highlights. Scott Whalen's piece on the Old Gold Shows stood out as a launching pad for a few views and further research into one of radio's dark corners as far as Bing is concerned. Without Whiteman and the Rhythm Boys we would have had a different Crosby. Bing's feel for jazz developed because he rubbed shoulders with some of the best. Whiteman's payroll confirms that the bandleader recognised talent even if he didn't always utilise it to the full. In addition, Bing's ability to duet with just about everyone owes something to his work with Rinker, Barris and others during his Whiteman years.

You may have heard that we were involved in a traffic accident in August. Kath had a fractured spine, broken ribs and abdominal damage. The long term outcome should be complete mobility and what we hope will be a full recovery.
(Editor: We were horrified to learn of this serious accident and we all wish Kath a speedy return to full health. Flowers have been sent to Kath on behalf of the club.)

Pat Shields, 4502 Kraft Avenue, Studio City, CA 91602
I am writing in response to Scott Whalen's remarks in issue #119. Mr. Whalen praises the music made by Bing during his years with Paul Whiteman.....and I couldn't agree more! In fact, these recordings may well be my favourites. It's hard to articulate their appeal, but for me they showcase an infectious exuberance that would soon disappear almost completely from Bing's music. More simply state, they're FUN. Fun to listen to.....and they sound like Bing and the musicians are having great fun performing them. On these recordings, he frequently sings in a most appealing upper register which would pretty much disappear from his records by the end of the decade. Perhaps recording was still a great adventure at this point, and the newness had yet to wear off. Inevitably, the recording process would soon take on a certain assembly line quality but at this point in Bing's career, he sounds like he's still hungry....and I love it! (I certainly don't mean to cast aspersions on Bing's later work. I have many favourites there too. But I just think the Whiteman years were special.)

Stan White, 57 Stanley St., Rothwell, Northamptonshire NN14 6EA
Concerning Scott Whalen's thoughts about the recording session of January 26, 1933, I agree with his thoughts on this, that is not the Jimmy Dorsey style of the early thirties, but from what can be heard, it is very much the Benny Goodman style of that period. (When Goodman regrets not recording with Bing, he was talking about full accompaniment with his orchestra, surely!).

As for the question recently put to me by Leslie Gaylor, "when did you first start plugging Bing", the answer to that is, when I was about 16 in 1948 and working as a cinema projectionist. The cinema did have Bing 78s such as 'It's Easy to Remember', in addition, I would take in the monthly new releases from Brunswick and use them in the half hour run up to the first film, and thereafter during intervals. I don't think we ever remembered to log them all on the PRS returns! This lasted for a couple of years until I was called up for National Service. Years later, Frank Murphy took all of the film stills I collected at that time of Bing. By 1955, Les Gaylor and Frank had grabbed me for BCS membership, after seeing a letter I had written in Radio Review about Bing.

Frederick M. Sevekow, Jr., 3471 Silver Maple Drive, Danville, CA 94506, USA
I would like to pose a trivia question for you. In December, 1976, I had the good fortune to see Bing Crosby in his 50th Anniversary Show with Rosemary Clooney on opening night at New York's Uris Theater. (In fact, I had front-row center seats and could almost touch Bing.)
To publicize the show, Bing appeared on several local TV and radio talk shows. On one such talk show, he was interviewed by Stanley Siegel. Siegel was known for asking difficult or sometimes "off the wall" questions. After talking with Bing for several minutes, Siegel declared that "he was almost embarrassed to ask the next question." He stated that because of Bing's prominence and longevity, he hoped he would not be offended or consider the question trite, after which Bing told him to go ahead and ask. Thereupon, Siegel asked Bing: "What was your most memorable moment in show business?"
Bing quickly noted that the question did not offend him and that, to the contrary, he could not remember the last time someone had asked him that question. Bing paused and thought for about 45 seconds and then answered. What was his answer?
(Editor: I couldn't answer the question and if you can, turn to the end of the Letters section to see if you are right.)

Doreen Heasman, 76 Longland Drive, Totteridge, London N20 8HL
As you are no doubt aware, last Sunday Russell Davies included in his programme an extract from Jonzo 16 in which Bing is heard swearing. I was surprised that this should have been considered suitable for broadcasting on Radio 2 in an easy listening record programme in the afternoon and I have written to the Radio 2 Controller expressing my disgust. Unfortunately, I do not expect my views will be held in anything but contempt by them and as Jim Reilly says in his review of the album "most people will take it in their stride."

I am not one of those people and I was very upset by it. When I read that "...some eyebrows may be raised at Bing arguing with Jack Kapp", I certainly did not expect what I heard on Sunday. Frankly I find it impossible to understand why it was considered desirable to include this material in what promised to be such a worthwhile project..... It would be naive to imagine that anyone involved as Bing was, in an industry not exactly noted for

piety, would not be tarred with the same brush, but must all illusions be destroyed? After all, Bing did not use this kind of language in his public performances, as say Lenny Bruce did, so presumably it was never meant for publication.....

Before Sunday, I had intended to write expressing my disappointment that so much of BING 119 was devoted to Sinatra.....I think the claim constantly in circulation that Sinatra was the greatest entertainer of the century is ridiculous - made presumably by those who think the century began in the fifties and has already ended! How can anyone who was not around at the beginning of the century and never heard 'live' the stars of that period make comparisons with those of their own time who had the benefit of more advanced recording techniques. No doubt Jolson's audiences would have claimed the title for him. Who can say that Pavarotti is better than Caruso (or vice versa) without hearing them both under the same conditions. And who knows what may turn up in the next 15 months!
(Editor: Well, Doreen certainly makes her views clear! The Jack Kapp row does not show Bing in a good light but let us remember that this was a tired man of 32 who in his exasperation let a few words slip in order to make a point whilst in the company of close colleagues such as the Dorsey Brothers. Having said that Bing was not a Saint but we do know that he was most circumspect about his language, material and image when in the public arena. It was surprising that the BBC chose to play that particular extract from the CD. Turning to the Sinatra situation, whatever people's individual opinions, Frank Sinatra was one of the foremost popular singers of the century and it seemed only fitting to mark his passing appropriately. I do think that the media has gone over the top however and I can only agree with Doreen's opinions about the 'greatest' of the century. Whilst on that theme, Ken Merry has a few thoughts too.)

Ken Merry, 28 The Avenue, Bessacarr, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 5JX
The ending of this century will have some significance for all of us who have survived some of its years - and some of its excesses. An evaluation suggests that it was a century not magnanimous with pleasures and that ultimately the ones which prove to be the real ones are the small ones once regarded in their time as not very important such as say, the general culture, popular; musical and otherwise of the first fifty years or so.

An integral part of this popular perception was Bing Crosby and his, now often un-regarded, influence. In the interests of accuracy we must put on record by any means, references to all what was of value to us in our era before the destructive character of the new millennium steamrollers our era into the sand of a cultural desert that will make the Sahara look like the Garden Of Eden. Some of the references in the Spring issue of BING could contribute to our values being perpetuated.

One example is Arne Fogel's worthy achievement in getting Bing good coverage in a noteworthy jazz journal. Many in our international band of enthusiasts might take such assessments for granted yet there are those who deny the existence of a jazz ambiance in Bing. One was the late Benny Green who in his mellow years presented some fine programmes which contained good stuff of our musical era. However Benny was not a Bing enthusiast and too often damned him with faint praise. Earlier than Benny a figure who was influential in the spreading of Jazz, Alistair Cooke, always maintained that Bing was a jazz singer as well as a balladeer. There are indications that support this jazz aficionado. When Bing was a newer fella in the Whiteman era his close cronies were such as Frankie Trumbauer, Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang and I believe he shared a room with the legendary Bix. Some of their jazz influences must have been absorbed by Bing.

Many of us grew up with earlier jazz although we did not dip too deeply into its mechanics. We just liked its happy sound. On one collection on which Bing is accompanied by Buddy Cole, Bing sings "I'm Confessin'". He swings a part of it with some restrained whistling (although whistling; like drums, is not a very musical medium) and if this does not display a jazz feeling then perhaps Spike Jones should be canonized. Bing recorded some happy tracks with Dixieland Bands and later with Bob Scobey's Jazz band. And who can resist that magical rapport with Louis Armstrong. Combine all these aspects ~- now you has Jazz!.

A recurring phenomenon among Bing enthusiasts is a singular response to particular songs - witness the commendable defence by the Editor of, "Gigi". Experienced by some genuine enthusiasts are individual responses to certain songs which seem to be different to the general responses. However there must be a common factor recognised and accepted by the majority or there would not be appreciation societies like the I.C.C. After years of listening to Bing's records one feels that with his strong, deep baritone in different time-scales of his long career some songs are ideally suited to his voice. Surely a prime example is "Gigi". The very attractive song was part of a film score for players who were mainly actors, dancers, entertainers, and not really professional balladeers. The whole show is very pleasant . Yet the song "Gigi" is not fully expressed until those low notes of Bing do it justice. Another song which was more effectively sung outside the show's cast recording was "I've Never Been In Love Before", of "Guys And Dolls." This was dropped by the composer Frank Loesser from the film version in which he replaced the song with his blockbuster "The Eyes Of A Woman In Love". One feels that the former song suits Bing's voice that well it could have been written for him. These examples suggest that there are other choices which could be explored.

As for Big, Strong baritones - which now seem to be an extinct species: Apart from Bing and those unique 'newer Fellas' we enjoyed quite a few in our era. Nelson Eddy, Vaughn Monroe, Howard Keel, Robert Goulet - to refer to a few.

Another aspect is individual response to musical accompaniments on Bing's recordings. Many 'backings'

were 'trotted out' by John Scott and in these, subtleties can be detected if one listens a lot. In his vast recording output Bing had other accompaniments and some of these can provide a striking response in individual enthusiasts and become of special remembrance. Personally I suggest "Baia" with a strong rhythmic accompaniment by Xavier Cugat. In Bing's last years there is the haunting one by Alan Cohen, "The Rose In Her Hair". On "It Had To Be You" there is a fine trumpet introduction by Red Nichols which is certainly memorable.

Bing's deep notes, a good song and a special arrangement in a mundane domestic routine can give a levitation not always experienced by mere mortals. A continuing problem for those of our era was well noted by Stan White whose description of modern times and the post-50s music culture was not only colourful, it was deadly accurate. Our values and music have been forced underground by what is to us an alien majority. Yet there must be in excess of 10 million citizens who grew up and matured in the influence of BBC radio who like the media and the moguls have largely abandoned us. Apart from a couple of radio programmes or so a radio for us is largely superfluous unless one likes a bit of Radio 3 or 4. Oh how many of us miss Alan Dell!

Ken Gray, 1155 Pinewood Drive, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15243-1809, USA
It has been some time since I have been active in the ICC, but in the last year or so, I've gotten to know Wig Wiggins - who has become a good friend, and I finally have some time to devote to Crosby matters since I am no longer holding down two jobs.

Back at the end of April my wife, Roz, and I visited England for the first time, and we had an absolutely wonderful visit. We got to spend some time with John MeNicholas in London, and then we took the train to Nottingham to meet Barry Whittingham. Both John and Barry were extremely gracious hosts and while we did not have nearly enough time to spend in Nottingham, we are both very much looking forward to returning to England as soon as we can.

I wanted to write to you, especially, to urge all ICC members to fully support John McNicholas' Chronological Series, as financial support is, I believe, critical at this time. If Bing's legacy is to be preserved, his recordings must be restored and repressed from time to time for new record and play technologies-today the CD! John is doing what the medieval monks did before the printing press was invented, copying and re-copying older works before they are lost or destroyed. His efforts deserve our full support because if we don't do it, no one else will. I know there has been some criticism of John's use of alternate takes, but many were only issued on 78's; they are certainly of high artistic and historical merit; and many will certainly will be lost for good if a project like John's does not succeed. Moreover, the beauty of the CD is that for listening purposes, one can easily skip tracks if one so desires. Bing has recently enjoyed a mini-revival over here, I think largely because of his links to Frank Sinatra, but for the long run, projects like John's are essential for purposes of preserving Bing's artistic legacy. Again, I would urge everyone in the ICC to support John's efforts-financially and otherwise.

There is one other matter I would like to raise. Bing's album covers have received scant attention, particularly the covers of 78, 45 and 10 inch 33 albums issued here in the US (which were more numerous and colourful than those issued in Britain and elsewhere, I believe). The covers reproduce beautifully on a color copier, and I have in my collection most of the covers issued in the US (but not all), plus some from Britain and even Argentina. I would very much like to hear from anyone interested in compiling a Bing Crosby album cover book (strictly for non-commercial purposes, of course).

Roz and I look forward to meeting you and other ICC members on the next chance we have to get back to England. Please continue your fabulous work on BING Magazine.
(Editor: It's great to hear from Ken who is one of the foremost collectors in the USA. Do please support the marvellous series of CDs being issued by John McNicholas as suggested by Ken. The more financial support is provided the longer the series can continue.)

Bill Ewert, Wood Nymph, 7 Elfin Drive, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 9QG
The letter from our U.S. member Vernon Wesley Taylor which included comments concerning Carroll Carroll prompted me to unearth from my virtually nonexistent filling system some correspondence which the latter and I had in early 1978. In my first letter I must have made reference to my surprise that Carroll, considering his long association with Bing, had not made any public comment following Bing's death. In his reply Carroll said "I wrote no appreciation of Bing as I felt it would seem self serving to those such as yourself who knew of my connection with his career."

It may have been fancy on my part but when interviewed by Barry Norman when Bing was featured in the BBC series "The Hollywood Greats" Carroll was not as fulsome in his praise of Bing as I thought he might have been and I had the feeling that in spite of the passing of the years that he was still feeling upset at the way he had been dropped from the radio series.....
(Editor: Strictly speaking, Carroll Carroll was not dropped from the radio series. He remained with the Kraft Music Hall whilst Bing went off to do a show for Philco. However if Bing had wanted to continue the relationship, he would no doubt have persuaded Carroll to follow him but as we know Bing asked Bill Morrow to write the scripts for his new series. Perhaps Bing felt that after ten years, a new approach was needed?)

John Bignell, 21 St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 2QB
Having played and analysed the contents of the new 'MORE MEMORIES' Compact Disc, I can say without hesitation that the ICC 'Backroom Boys' in conjunction with MCA, have come up with another 'winner'. Firstly,

I must say that the sound reproduction is absolutely superb. It is obvious that great care and effort have gone into ensuring we hear Bing's voice at its best. Secondly, the twenty six titles selected cover a period of twelve years. The earliest being 'SKYLARK' and 'BLUE SHADOWS AND WHITE GARDENIAS' from 26th January 1942. Right through to 'SHE IS THE SUNSHINE OF VIRGINIA', recorded 21st June 1954, this selection is a real joy.

Appreciating that the full list of the contents of this CD will be prominently featured in Jim Reilly's review pages, I will content myself here with pointing out and highlighting some of the items which gave me particular pleasure. Here we have such treasures as 'OH, TELL ME WHY', a trail blazing early example of 'multi-track' recording in 1954. 'TILL THE END OF THE WORLD' recorded in April 1952 with the splendidly eccentric Grady Martin and his Slew Foot Five will be new to many of our members and certainly to the public at large as it has never before appeared on commercial LP or CD.
Summarising the 26 titles in conjunction with my own extensive (BUT NOT COMPLETE) collection I come up with the following facts. Four titles are first time on LP or CD for me. (MORE AND MORE, WITHOUT A WORD OF WARNING # 1951, STRANGE MUSIC and THE LAST MILE HOME). Seven further titles I had previously held on non commercial LPs only. None of the remaining titles have appeared but rarely on commercial LPs. I presume none of the 26 titles have appeared on Compact Disc before? All in all here we have a quite outstanding collection which should surely satisfy even the most discerning and fastidious collector. One final thought. I found 'THE SWEETEST STORY EVER TOLD' a real treasure. I had not played the LP containing this 1945 recording with Ethel Smith on the organ for many years and it came back to me amazingly fresh and delightful. My message to all who read this is:- 'You have a real treat in store - GO OUT AND BUY IT'.

Bing's Most Memorable Moment in Show Business?

The answer to the question mentioned by Frederick Sevekow? After pausing to reflect, Bing answered: "The day I sang 'On Treasure Island' before 120 thousand people at the San Francisco World's Fair."

We mentioned this occasion in BING# 110 (page 12) and also Kathryn Crosby refers to it on page 211 of her book 'Bing and Other Things'. It was October 8, 1939 and interesting that Bing should remember it so vividly so many years later. What did you think he might have picked? The war time experiences entertaining the troops? The Palladium shows? His Oscar?

LIONEL'S LINES

".... AND THE LOSER 1S ...."

By the time that you read this, it is possible that you've already laid the Argos catalogue away for another year, wrapped up the polished aluminium candlesticks (a present from Ikea for Auntie Em and dead ringers for those pre-war milk bottles with the cardboard tops) and you may have also discovered that you were slightly presumptuous in gloating over the "value for money" box of Christmas crackers you had foresight enough to snap up in last January's sales.

It is still Autumn where I am and the leaves have scarce begun to turn to the glorious shades of russet and gold that, on a wet patio, spell three months in traction and from being a once a day junkie, I have just made my annual visit to the cinema. How the old place has changed. An Eastern bazaar straggles across the acreage of the foyer, now larger than any of the multiple auditoria. It is complete with "Uncle Ripoff's Sweet Factory" and serried ranks of machines which apart from dispensing salty popcorn and thirst provoking drinks, can assimilate your credit card in exchange for a ticket to a neck-wrenching, seat in the front stalls that you wouldn't have spent ninepence on, in the old days. In case you're taking Grannie, I will whisper that there is also, a kiosk, peddling glossy magazines which are definitely not "The Picturegoer".

In the hall of darkness, performances are no longer "continuous", the seats don't tip up and although they incorporate personal plastic trays, cunningly moulded to hold the gallon beaker of Coke which has just cost your life's savings, there is a complete absence of ashtrays - where do we put the toffee papers and orange peel?. Why does that silvery beam no longer struggle to slice its way through a troposphere of tobacco smoke?

The aisles are lit with twinkling fairy lights, embedded in the floor, similar to those you must follow in the event of an emergency on a Jumbo Jet. But they lead absolutely nowhere because there appears to be no other exit apart from the door by which you entered. When I was a youngster, my Uncle Wally had me going for ages with his imaginary, "Mr. Pushbar Toopen", a character, whom he asserted, was "way out". It took me a long while to catch on but having once missed the "big" film due to a fire in the projection box, I feel strangely comforted by six double doors, with foot high, green-lit "EXIT" signs and in bygone years, of course, they also provided mustering stations for the opportunists who were torn between watching the dying seconds of the main attraction whilst avoiding the unseemly stampede, before the first note of the National Anthem, with a view to catching the last bus home.

And the movies will never be the same. The magic has

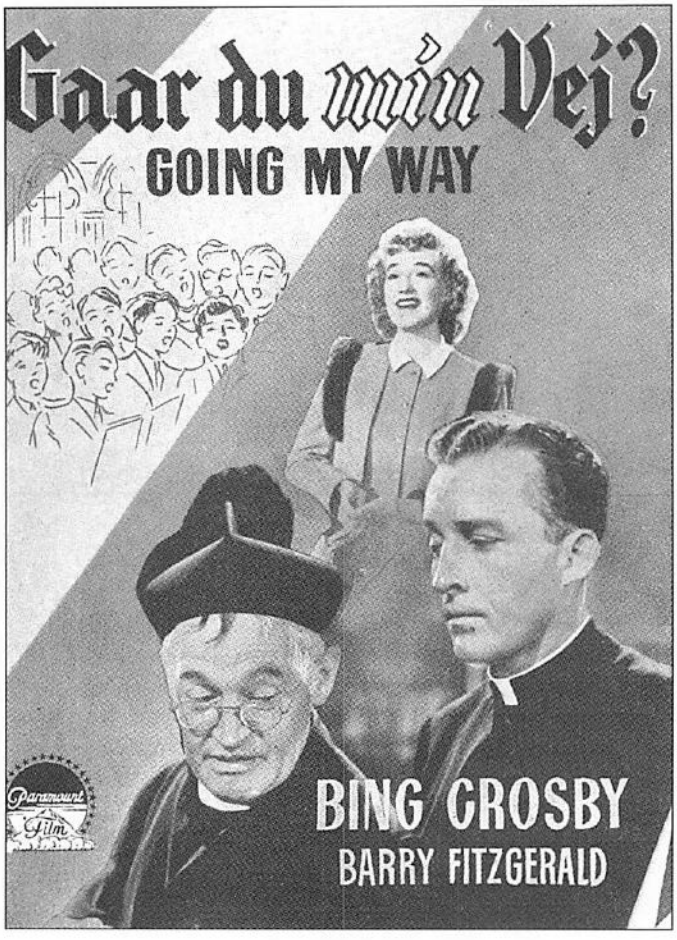
gone. Nothing is left to the imagination. I am not impressed by bullets that ricochet around my head or the shuddering tread of Tyrannosaurus Rex approaching from the rear. The effects may be ear-splitting but the actors mutter. With a few notable exceptions, they used to speak up in the old days. I had no problems in hearing the scandalous, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn", the laconic, "Here's looking at you, kid" or the saccharin, "Every time a bell rings, it means some angel's just got his wings". Chris Pin Martin didn't faze me with, "Ay Ceesco, the solyiers come, I teeenk" and others to consider are, Jay Silverheels' perfect enunciation of, "Him dead, Kemo Sabe", the crystal clarity of Tom and Jerry - "Listen Pussy Cat, if I find ya boddering my boy again, I'll tear ya apart" or Barry Fitzgerald's unmistakable whisper, "Me bhoy, d'yeh ... d'yeh know 'Too Ra Loo Ra Loo'?"

"Me bhoy, d'yeh ...d'yeh know 'Too Ra Loo Ra Loo'?"

Even the bit players' cliches were delivered with the power of a soapbox orator, "Why you dirty..."; "Wotta we waitin' fer - Le's string him up" or "I'm crazy about ya - Ya big lug" and when someone thundered, "There ain't an Apache / Jap around here for miles" you could be certain that Noah Beery Jr. would be cashing in his chips before the end of the reel. But the all time favourite has got to be, "Say, that's a great toon - does it have any words?" You can bet your life it does and Alice Faye or Betty Grable or Don Ameche or John Payne will warble the nascent ditty, off the cuff, without further reference to the songsheet, before you can say "what key is that?"

That's what I miss at the cinema - "The Musical Film". I know that the big name for the production of musicals has been ceded to MGM but I have a soft spot for the ones churned out by the Twentieth Century Fox, sausage machine, featuring any or all of the stars named above and you will recollect that Tyrone Power scraped a pretty nifty violin in "Alexander's Ragtime Band". They were often in "Glorious Multiplane Technicolor", brightening up the war years and the supporting casts could be any permutation from Jack Oakie, Charlotte Greenwood, Jack Haley, Carmen Miranda and Cesar Romero. How the melodies flowed. Incidentally, I haven't troubled to look but does any one know the last time a number from a genuine, bona fide musical carried off the Oscar for the Best Song ? - and I will accept no Disney cartoons.

When you think about it, the characters Bing Crosby played in the movies were often songwriters, if only as a part-time pursuit. Although we never actually saw Father O'Malley, chewing on a pencil and racking his brain for a rhyme, we were led to believe that he made a pretty penny out of "Swinging On A Star" (as did his impersonator!). Including this song, Bing was directly involved with four Academy Award "winners" and ten "losers". He recorded all of them and, during the course of time, recorded another dozen "winners" together with some of the "losers" which had been nominated without his help. Others were heard only, on the air and naturally, it is mainly these that we shall be looking at.



Songwriter Father O'Malley - Danish poster supplied by Bertel Dueholm

At its inception, in 1934, there were only three entrants for the best song award. "The Continental" took the honours, as one of two selections from Astaire / Rogers movies but "Love In Bloom" from "She Loves Me Not" was a first time loser for Bing (or, more precisely, Ralph Rainger and Leo Robin) and this, in spite of his recording of the song being released a month prior to the film's opening and quickly climbing to the top of the charts. It is known that he sang the number on at least two occasions on Woodbury Soap broadcasts but precise details of this series have proved difficult to unearth and it seems likely that it would have been used on other occasions. Although an example survives in a medley of the film's songs, from Kraft Music Hall, easily, the most unusual offering is found on Philco Radio Time (22.10.46) when, standing in for "Dr. Horatio G. Birdbath" and supported by "The Saliva Sisters", he chuckles his way through a full

rendition to a battlefield accompaniment from Spike Jones and his City Slickers.

In 1937, there were five nominees and according to critical hindsight, four of these were better songs than the winner, "Sweet Leilani". Bing recorded two of the others, "They Can't Take That Away From Me" (destined to be Gershwin's only shot at an Oscar) and topped the charts with "Remember Me?" which he also sang on Kraft (6.1.38), in parodied form, with that dauntingly, cool movie actress, Constance Bennett. On radio, he presents the other "failures", "Whispers In The Dark" (28.10.37) from "Artists And Models" starring Jack Benny and "That Old Feeling" (21.10.37) from an early Technicolor extravaganza, "Walter Wanger's Vogues Of 1938". There is another impromptu vocal of this last-named song, with a decidedly, "off the air" flavour. Ken Carpenter, Bob Bums and Connie Boswell are all in attendance and as one might expect, Bing "doesn't remember the words" and calls on Miss Boswell to prompt him but she proves to he of little help when, as happened in his "straight" version, he loses the line, "Once again, I seem to feel that old yearning" but this time he invents some new words and jokes, "There's a good lyric!"

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SWEET LEILANI (Owens)
(From "Waikiki Wedding")
BING CROSBY with
Lani McIntire and His Hawaiians.
Brunswick
02443 A
FABRIQUÉ EN ANGLETERRE — MADE IN ENGLAND

"Over The Rainbow" experienced little opposition in carrying off the coveted statuette in 1939 but among the nominees was another "dreams can come true" song that made just one appearance on The Kraft Music Hall. It was written by Buddy DeSylva for "Love Affair". The director was Leo McCarey, who would later play a significant part in Bing's Hollywood career and who seemed to make a habit of directing pictures containing best song contenders, as the title song of his subsequent remake of the film, "An Affair To Remember", in 1957, proved. In defiance of the clicks and scratches, Bing's rendition of, "Wishing (Will Make It So)" (18.5.39) still makes very pleasant listening.

A pair of songs that unsuccessfully joined the queue for awards in consecutive years deserve to be treated together, as they were both by Harry Warren and Mack Gordon and both were featured by Glenn Miller. Two examples of Bing singing, "Chattanooga Choo Choo" (6.11.41 & 29.1.42) survive. The second version impresses as being the more relaxed of the two with The Music Maids swinging their "Doo, Doo, Doo, Der, Dit's" and the crooner throwing in, "I used to call the kid 'funnyface '"

You may recall that in 1942, "I've Got A Gal In Kalamazoo" (1. 10.42 & 15. 10.42) met with some tough opposition in the Oscar stakes. The fact that the music was written first, underlines a particularly effective piece of writing by Mack Gordon. Once again, there are two Crosby renditions. The first is perfectly presented and sticks close to the book. The second is mystifying, to say the least and to me, is redolent of Ira Gershwin's famous story of the chorus girl auditioning, "Let's Call The Whole Thing Off ' with:

> "You say eyether and I say eyether,
> You say nyther and 1 say nyther,
> Eyether, eyether, nyther, nyther ....

Bing must have lost his copy of the lyric that he had sung two weeks previously and appears to have some words written on his cuff. The whole point of musically, spelling out the place name, "K-A-L-A ..... etc., is that the last vowel, isn't the letter "O" but the word "Oh!" as in "Oh! What a gal, a real pip-er-oo". However, Bing sings "..... M-A-Z-Double O", Oh! My, What a gal". In effect, he has inserted several more syllables than the available notes, causing him to abandon the phrase "..... a real pip-er-oo" and he repeats the same error later in the song but that's our boy, eh?

In the same year that Sammy Cahn's record run of 26 nominations began with "I've Heard That Song Before" (21.1.43), Burton Lane and Ralph Freed had a hit from the last Rooney / Garland musical, "Babes On Broadway" with "How About You" (12.3.42). Bing waited until 1958 before recording his delightful duet with Rosemary Clooney and if you liked this, you will also enjoy his excursion with The Music Maids but you needn't lose your head over "Franklin Roosevelt's looks"!

The 1943 awards threw up a slew of ballads whose themes were, coincidentally, relevant to wartime partings. Alice Faye sang, "You'll Never Know" (12.8.43), down a telephone line in Fox's "Hello, Frisco, Hello", providing the team of Warren and Gordon with their first Oscar. Luckily, Bing's only (ever?) performance, of the number has been preserved for posterity and furthermore, he gave voice to a couple of 'standards' which failed to make the grade. Although it contained some familiar lines, more suited to Superman than young lovers, "....I'll push aside the mountain, drain the ocean dry..", "We Mustn't Say Goodbye" (24.6.43), sung by Lanny Ross in "Stage Door Canteen" was admirably suited to the Groaner's "heartfelt" mode and he found a particular affinity with Cole Porter's "You'd Be So Nice To Come To" (28.1.43), using it twice, with Janet Blair, who introduced it in, "Something To Shout About" and in a rare duet with Ginny Simms. He saw fit to develop the song again, in his series for General Electric and later with Buddy Cole.

Leo McCarey's "Going My Way" scooped the pool in

Leo McCarey's "Going My Way" scooped the pool in 1944, with 7 Oscars including a "first" for Burke and Van Heusen but I shouldn't have to advise you, it wasn't for "I'm Making Believe" (21.12.44), a No. 1 hit for Ella Fitzgerald and The Ink Spots but originally performed in the film, "Sweet And Lowdown" by Lynn Bari with accompaniment by the Benny Goodman Orchestra. Bing Crosby showcased the tune, three times on the Music Hall, with the usual competent assistance from the John Scott Trotter Orchestra.

1945 brought an unprecedented fourteen nominees for best song, plus twelve for the scoring of a musical and no less than twenty-one for the scoring of a drama or comedy. The Academy had been allowing the studios to make their own nominations in these categories. RKO, for instance, had submitted four runners, including, "Sleigh Ride In July" (25.1.45) and "Aren't You Glad You're You" (7.2.46). The farcical situation that had arisen inspired a re-think and henceforth there would be only five nominees in each division.

The first winner under the new set-up was the Warren/Mercer song, "On The Atchison, Topeka And The Santa Fe" from "The Harvey Girls". Bing recorded this together with the other four nominations - "I Can't Begin To Tell You", "All Through The Day", "You Keep Coming Back Like A Song" (naturally) and "Ole Buttermilk Sky" (eventually). Special mention must be made of Jerome Kern's, "All Through The Day". After a nice little tribute to the composer, Bing was preparing to sing the song, in the penultimate show for Kraft, on May 2nd 1946 when the orchestral introduction was wrecked by a surprise visit from Bob Hope, bearing a birthday cake and leading the audience in "Happy Birthday To You". Bing's subsequent presentation of the song became somewhat disjointed by chortles and additional comments, making the whole thing sound spontaneous enough to be true. He was scheduled to sing, "I Can't Begin To Tell You" at the 1946 Academy Awards ceremony but excused himself, in favour of Dick Haymes, on the grounds of live performance nerves. Strange, after four years of entertaining the troops. Even stranger, perhaps, was the selection of Frank Sinatra to present, "You Keep Coming Back Like A Song" but he too pulled out, claiming that he would merely be "following in Crosby's footsteps"

Bing chose not to record the next two winners, "Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah" (22.1.47) and "Buttons And Bows" (17.11.48). The first, from Disney's "Song Of The South", although still remembered today, enjoyed only a modicum of success but Livingston and Evans "Buttons & Bows", introduced by Bob Hope in "The Paleface" was a smash hit, with Dinah Shore's recording staying in the charts for an astonishing six months. However, by way of records, radio and television, Bing continued to give the "losers" a break, through "It's Magic", "My Foolish Heart", "Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo", "Too Late Now", "Am I In Love?" and "That's Amore" right up until 1975 when he recorded, with Fred Astaire "How Lucky Can You Get" written for Barbra Streisand in "Funny Lady".

'Bing sings 'You Keep Coming Back Like a Song' in 'Blue Skies'

We must take heart from the fact that every one of the songs that lost, at least made second place. One such, from 1936 was, "I've Got You Under My Skin". I'll bet you can hum or whistle it but how are you on the Oscar winning song from "The Poseidon Adventure"?

Now, back to the future. The lady I live with, is employed by a company in the United States and was somewhat mystified on receiving an E-Mail from them, querying her requirements for "Holiday cards". On enquiry, it was revealed that this should have read, "Winter Holiday cards". Apparently, it is no longer politic to call them "Christmas cards". Is this true, America? What will you chaps in Australia call them? Not one to be drawn into an argument about the title of a two thousand year-old anniversary, I shall content myself with offering my best wishes for the festive season to all readers and at this time of year it might be appropriate to quote the immortal words of Tiny Tim - "Tiptoe through the tulips with me."

Lionel Pairpoint

A C90 cassette comprising most of the songs mentioned (and others) is available from the writer - Cost £3 (including p&p and contribution to club funds). Readers in the USA should contact Wig Wiggins. (Please note that some items are of indifferent fidelity)

BING - A DIARY OF A LIFETIME

In recent editions, we have used this heading to give updates about various discoveries we have made about Bing which in turn produce additions and amendments to the diary we have published of Bing's life. So yet again, we have some information to pass on to you following research by various members.

First of all can I mention Norman Wolfe and Ruth Carr from Atlanta, Georgia who diligently examined their local papers and produced some very nice cuttings from 1943 about Bing's visit to their city. These can be summarised as follows:

1943

May 29 Joins Bob Hope in Atlanta, Georgia and they play golf at the Capitol City Country Club with Morton Bright, Bobby Dodd and Ed Dudley as a warm up for a major benefit on the following day.

May 30 Starting at 3:00 p.m., Bing and Bob Hope play in an exhibition golf match for the benefit of the Red Cross at the Capitol City Club before a crowd of around 10,000 which was then the largest gallery in Atlanta golf history. Bing and Ed Dudley beat Hope and Johnny Bulla 2 and 1 in the 14 hole contest. During the show at the course after the golf, Bing sings 'White Christmas'. Bing and Bob then depart for two weeks entertaining at camps and hospitals and playing benefit golf exhibitions.

Very valuable information which helps us to fill-in some of the gaps in our knowledge about Bing's wartime activities. Many thanks to Norman and Ruth. Steven Lewis was another who responded to my call and he investigated Bing's visits to Kansas City in WWII and provided me with details. Steven has placed the newspaper extracts about these visits on his Web site and good reading they make too.

I have also heard from Gary Giddins as follows:

"Here's a minor correction. You have 'Two Plus Fours' completed June 10, 1930. According to the Pathe Production Sheet, the script was completed May 23; rehearsals started May 27; shooting started May 29; shooting completed one day ahead of schedule June 2; first previews were at the Belmont Theater on June 19; the film was shipped July 7. Picture cost $19,689. This is the kind of minutiae I can't use but may be of value to you."

Wow! How about that for detail. In thanking Gary, I told him that I was very happy indeed to be bombarded by minutiae such as this and I look forward to picking up further gems from him in due course.

Since its publication, the 'diary' has been sent to various members of Bing's family and George O'Reilly had a nice letter from Nathaniel Crosby some months ago which reads:

"Thank you so much for the copy of the book you sent me on Dad. It is, going away, one of the most thorough and well done I have ever seen. I have not had the chance to read it cover to cover yet, but have glanced through it randomly and read a lot of it in this manner. Particularly moving was the photo at my Father's memorial service. Never had I seen that. My deepest gratitude extends to you and all involved in such a respectful piece of work.
Warmest regards, Nathaniel P. Crosby"

In BING #119, Wig mentioned that he and I had visited the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington DC in June. The inspiration for the visit was member Chris Way, whom you may remember, has written a marvellous book about Glenn Miller and his activities in the UK during the war. Chris has also dug out some interesting data about Bing's tour here in 1944 and in an effort to obtain the full picture of Bing's visit, Chris wrote to the National Archives seeking details of the USO files and was told where they were but that, unfortunately, the Archives people were unable to undertake the research. Hence the visit by Wiggins and Macfarlane to the National Archives at College Park.

Let me quote from one of the official publications of the Archives:

"The National Archives and Records Administration acquires, preserves, and makes available for research records of enduring value created or received by various components of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the federal government. The National Archives promotes the fullest possible public use of the records in its custody while protecting personal, restricted, or classified information against unauthorised

disclosure.....The records of the federal government held by the National Archives come in many forms, such as loose papers, bound volumes, motion picture films, videotapes, sound recordings, still photographs, maps, and electronic records."

Security at the vast site is tight and Wig and I were closely scrutinised at arrival before we were allowed on to the floor containing the records we were seeking. Chris Way had been informed that the Records of Camp Shows Inc. 1941-1957 consisted of eight bound volumes of material concerning USO shows. These were duly produced to us and we pored through them to find that they were mainly minutes of the various meetings held by the controlling committee. The United Services Organisation (USO) was set up in the early days of the war and in turn the USO created Camp Shows Inc. which organised entertainers to go around the forces camps putting on shows. Although the vast binders contained mainly notes of minutes, there were some details of the stars employed in the early years and Wig spotted some most interesting information about Bing's tour in August 1942 to various places. This in turn led me to research the local libraries in Denver, Cheyenne and Salt Lake City later in our holiday (we were going to those places anyway, honest!) and this information has been added to our diary which now reads as follows for the period in question.

1942

Jul 25 (a.m.) Arrives in Salt Lake City, Utah and checks in at the Hotel Utah. Gives interviews to local pressmen before rehearsing in the Presidents Room with Jimmy Van Heusen. Goes on to play golf with George Schneiter at the Ogden Country Club.

Jul 26 (2:00 p.m.) Teams up with Bob Hope for a golf match at Salt Lake City with the profits going to the Army Benefit Fund at Fort Douglas. A crowd of 4,500 watch Bob Hope and Ed Dudley beat Bing and George Schneiter one up at the Salt Lake Country Club. Bing and Bob give a short impromptu show just off the 18th. green after the match before going to the bombing and gunnery camp at Wendover to give a performance for the servicemen. Jimmy Van Heusen accompanies Bing at both shows. They all return to Salt Lake City for the night.

Jul 27 Bing goes on to Colorado Springs with Ed Dudley.

Aug 1 American Federation of Musicians commences recording ban by its members which continues until September 18, 1943 in the case of Decca.

Aug 4 Holiday Inn is released.

Aug 4 Bing joins USO Camp Show unit # 32 with Phil Silvers and Rags Ragland and their show "Full Speed Ahead" which begins a tour at Camp Lewis, Washington. The attendance is 2276.

Aug 5/6 Bing heads more camp shows at Camp Lewis with 2476 forces personnel seeing the shows on August 5th and a further 1788 in the audience on the next day.

Aug 6 In Tacoma, sings at the Liberty Centre to help the War Savings Bonds drive.

Aug 7 The Camp Show is at the Naval Air Station, Seattle where the total attendance is 2139.

Aug 8 Having stayed overnight at Tacoma Country Club, Bing travels to Seattle where he appears in Victory Square, in front of 15,000 people with Phil Silvers and Rags Ragland. The same day goes to a 'Hole-In-One' competition at Beacon Hill (where he hits a few balls) and then entertains Naval combat fliers at Sand Point.

Subsequently goes on to appear in Spokane and Boise, Idaho.

Aug 10 Bing arrives at Cheyenne, Wyoming on an early morning train and checks in at the Plains Hotel. Together with Phil Silvers, Rags Ragland and Jimmy Van Heusen they entertain at Fort Warren where 1798 soldiers attend the two evening shows.

Aug 11 (11:15 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.) Bing presents a radio programme over station KFBC in Cheyenne and over $15,000 worth of war bonds are sold. More than 1,000 people pack the mezzanine at the Plains Hotel to watch and hear the show. During the afternoon, Bing undertakes a three hour tour of the Quartermaster Replacement Training Centre at Fort Warren including at 3:00 p.m. a special programme for the patients in the camp hospital where he sings six songs. He then returns to his hotel before presenting two more shows in Fort Warren's Theatre No. 2 at night and this time the attendance totals 2720.

Aug 13 The tour reaches Camp Carson, Colorado Springs and 2076 people watch the shows. During the day, Bing and Lawson Little golf at Broadmoor and defeat Bud Maytag and Ed Dudley 3 and 2. Bing has a 74. Approximately 2,000 fans watch the proceedings.

Aug 14 Further shows at Camp Carson in front of 4,152 people.

Aug 15 Bing and Bob Hope play golf on the Broadmoor course at Colorado Springs against Lawson Little and Ed Dudley in front of a crowd of 4,000 with receipts going to the Camp Carson Recreation Fund. Bing cards a 78 and the match finishes even.

Aug 16 Starting at 11:00 a.m., Bing and Lawson Little golf against Bob Hope and Ed Dudley at the Cherry Hills course, Denver, Colorado. A crowd of over 6,000 (including Governor Ralph Carr) watch the 13 hole match which is won by Hope and Dudley one up. Bing and Bob put on a show at the driving range after the match and are helped by entertainers from Lowry Field. Radio station KOA broadcasts some of the show. The proceeds of the day go to the four army camps in the area.

Amazing the information which was produced from having more precise dates for Bing's tour. You will note that ideally we need someone to examine the Spokane and Boise newspapers to expand those entries.

As we went through the volumes at the National Archives, references to artists became rarer and the only reference to Bing's European tour in 1944 was that he was part of OSU #329 which left on August 16, 1944 and returned on October 8, 1944. Undoubtedly though, the files will contain more information about Bing's activities but finding it will be a real challenge and would require more time than most of us have available. You may like to know that USO Camp Shows played their last engagement on December 31, 1947.

During our time at the National Archives, we searched through the computerised database (which incidentally can now be accessed through the Internet at http://www.nara.gov) and discovered over 60 references to Bing. The first one was a reference to a Scrap Rubber Drive in June 1942 and again we can provide a photograph to accompany mention of this.

There were films, sound recordings and paper records in the list including details of various Paramount News reels held in the Archives. Bing was apparently featured in the Paramount News reels on the following dates:
July 22, 1940, December 30, 1941, May 12, 1942,

November 6, 1942, February 6, 1944, August 17, 1944, September 18, 1944, March 6, 1945, March 23, 1945, June 20, 1945, September 1, 1945, March 1, 1947, April, 12, 1947, April 3, 1948, May 8, 1948, May 22, 1948, June 5, 1948, February 16, 1949, June 18, 1949, April 22, 1950, June 17, 1950, July 5, 1950, August 22, 1951, March 5, 1952, October 20, 1952, December 29, 1954 and April 29, 1955

I had no idea that Bing had appeared so often in the newsreels and there's a challenge for Bob DeFlores and Ron Hall of Festival Films to track all of those down! A film called 'Now About Christmas' which Bing made for the National Tuberculosis Association in 1943 is also held in the Archives together with other rare films. Makes the mouth water, doesn't it?

I mentioned that my holiday took me to Salt Lake City and I looked in at the Family Search Centre run by the Church of the Latter Day Saints. The records held there are quite incredible and apart from looking up my own family, I looked up Bing. From the Social Security Death Index, I found Bing's records which I now reproduce below. It's interesting to note that the correct date of birth is given.

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CROSBY, Harry

Birth Date                    Social Security #
3 May 1903                    563-12-5928

State of Issuance of Social Security Number
California

Death Date
Oct 1977

State of Residence at Death          Zip Code
California                           90211


State Where Death Benefit Was Sent   Zip Code
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Whilst in Salt Lake City, I also checked the old newspapers in the library for details of Bing's visit there in 1945 and to continue the custom of the last few issues of BING, the covering article is reproduced to give you a flavour of what Bing and Bob Hope were doing to raise morale and money during those difficult years.

Malcolm Macfarlane

Crosby - Hope Trip Raises $25,000 for Bushnell

by Richard Squires

Leaving a trail of laughs from the moment they hit Salt Lake City Saturday afternoon until they left Sunday night, Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, abetted by raucous Jerry Colonna and songstress Gail Robbins, accomplished their mission to Utah - funds for the construction of a nine-hole golf course and club house at Bushnell General Hospital were in the hands of the executive committee. In a little over 24 hours, the two top national entertainers played four evening shows at Bushnell, drove and funned their way around 18 holes of golf at Fort Douglas, added their irrepressible exuberance to a benefit dinner at Hotel Utah and presented a howling two hour show before more than 25,000 persons in the University of Utah stadium.

Net result - an estimated $25,000 for Bushnell hospital rehabilitation facilities, more than 25,000 persons still smiling, and an assured spot in the hearts of nearly 500 amputees who will receive the benefit of their funning. Beginning shortly after noon Sunday at Fort Douglas golf course where they played and clowned to a fairway audience of about 3500 persons the two entertainers kept at it until a parting shot at the Airport Sunday. (For details of golf match see sports page.) As they boarded the army plane, Hope turning his ski-jump nose in the direction of the snow capped Wasatch range said, "Look at the hills all covered with Pepsodent toothpaste - plug!"

The final show at the Utah stadium attracted what was termed a record crowd by the Bushnell General Hospital benefit committee. All seats in the stands were taken, the field before the stage in the north end was covered by veterans in wheel chairs, veterans of both world wars, and crowds overflowed to walls, aisles and press box roof. Although Bing and Bob were in peak form, their friendly enemy routine and glib repartee kept the stands in stitches, the feature of the program was the presenting of the funds for the nine-hole course to Col. Robert M. Hardway, commanding officer of Bushnell General Hospital.....

....But as was expected, Bob and Bing were the show. Introduced by Hope variously as "Sinatra's father, the singing jockey and the Groaner" Bing replied in kind before guaranteeing with his voice his place at the head of popular singers. Hope kept the stands roaring with his rapier sharp shafts of wit. On Bing's horse racing enterprises: "I bet two bucks on the nose of one - he ran like he was trying to balance it. Last I heard he was being led down the home stretch, the jockey out in front with a flashlight. Bing gave me the dope - shoulda given it to the horse." Siren-voiced, ogle-eyed Jerry Colonna, "the poor man's Caruso," brought throaty roars with his rendition

(accent on the "rend") of 'On the Road to Mandalay'.

Preceding the gala evening show, the troupe met civic and military leaders at a benefit banquet at the Hotel Utah. More than 450 persons jammed the Lafayette ballroom, paying $7.50 per plate for the privilege of watching Bing and Bob carry on. They also added $3000 to the general golf course fund. Seated at the head table, next to Gov. Herbert B. Maw, Bing's nonchalance and ever-present pipe competed for attention with Colonna's moustache, the beauteous Miss Robbins and Hope's constant mugging....

...But the banquet, too, was featured by the clowning of the Hollywood celebrities. Following a somewhat complicated description of the parking arrangements at the university stadium, Mr. Lang was cut short by be-moustached Colonna who shouted: "In other words, its a mess." Recapitulation of the day's activity, shows that approximately 30,000 persons contributed to the fund by attending either the dinner golf match or stadium show. Mr. Bristol estimated that between $25,000 and $30,000 would be turned over to the hospital, from ticket sales.

The Salt Lake Tribune Monday, June 18, 1945

Bing Crosby Rises Above the Noise

Neil Daly of Safety Harbor, Florida sent us a cutting from a North Carolina golf magazine called 'Triad Golf Today' which contained a nice article by a golf writer called John Derr. In the article, Mr. Derr is describing a social gathering in September 1953 at which Jack Benny and Bill Paley (of CBS) are present and the discussion is about Ben Hogan. He continues:

....That might have ended the episode except Bing Crosby, whom I had met, ambled by and joined in the conversation about Hogan. Crosby hosted the PGA at Pebble Beach and although NBC, ABC and Mutual had tried, no network ever came up with a sponsor. This was a sore spot with Bing. Here he was, putting on an outstanding charity tournament with the very top Hollywood celebrities and pro golfers and the networks couldn't sell it. With an ally like Benny in hand, Crosby turned to Mr. Paley and said he wanted CBS to do the radio coverage of his event next January and he wanted it sponsored. Even though no sponsor was in sight, Mr. Paley agreed that CBS Radio would broadcast it. If you own the network you can do that. Crosby had one other request. He asked that I be sent to California to do the play-by-play. I heard no commitment.

When time neared to put it on our schedule, to order phone lines and engineering, a month before the tournament, it was still not sold. No takers, even with Bing helping out. On all sustaining (unsold) shows for purposes of economy we used local announcers. I set up the program to be staffed entirely by West Coast personnel with minimal travel costs. Crosby found that out and called Mr. Paley, asking why I was not flying out to share the microphone with him. Next day I got orders to head for Pebble Beach. It was lucky Bing had a big home right on the course. He asked me to stay there. He had other house guests, including Dolores and Bob Hope and a starlet friend.

The night before the tournament, in those days, there was a grand Calcutta. Already such betting ventures were frowned on by the USGA and Crosby took no part in it except to open the program and welcome his guests. As he and Bob prepared to drive over to the Inn, Bing told me they would be gone only a few minutes and I didn't need to go unless I wanted to. Hope, in his inimitable humor, said, "Damned if that's so. He's going with us. I'm not leaving him here with Dolores."

Bing and Ben Hogan

The broadcasts were not sold but we shared the mike and had a lot of fun reporting, especially the travails of Bing's Hollywood friends. Bing was a funny man, on or off the air. An example of the kind of person Crosby was, at least in his time with me. We were walking down a street near the Inn and a tall gentleman was on the other side of the road walking in our direction.

"Do you know who that is?" Bing asked. I said I didn't. "That's Johnny Mack Brown." Then I knew who he was. A former Alabama football player, Brown was a great Western star, truly a matinee idol. Instead of crossing over to meet Brown, Crosby called to him, "Come over here Mack, I want you to meet a friend of mine." Most folks would have done it the other way.

Crosby was a thoughtful person. One day at Pebble I said I had toured Chinatown looking for unusual frogs for Peggy's frogatorium. I explained that her collection of

some 350 frogs included glass, wooden, porcelain and almost every other material as our friends from around the world added to her collection. He asked me if she had any brass frogs. Told that she had solid brass likenesses, he said he would get her one made unlike any in her collection. He knew a craftsmen in Monterey who used plumbing materials to create knick - knacks. A few days later he sent her a custom-made frog, really "one-of-a-kind." Bing had gone to the man's shop and explained how he wanted it made.

Until his death after a golf game in Spain we remained in touch. A month before he died, he wrote me a three-page letter describing the problems he was having with the PGA in running his charity tournament, trying to meet their requirements. He was not happy. Several times he came to the Masters and strolled the course like any other golf fan. One one of his last visits there an amusing episode happened. It was late in the day of the second round and I had joined the gallery at the 18th. Play was almost finished and as I strode toward the clubhouse I chanced to run into my sister, Eleanor, who lived in Atlanta. I had been unable to get her tickets and was surprised to see her in the throng at the Masters.

"Gee, I wish I had known you were here," I told her. "There are some people here I would have liked to introduce to you."

As we chatted I spotted Crosby walking up the hill toward the clubhouse. I broke in to tell her...."There goes Crosby, for instance..."

"Oh, I've met him already."

How did that happen I asked.

"You were always talking about these people you know and I never knew if you were fibbing or not. I saw Crosby this morning and decided I'd find out if you really knew some of these people. I stepped up to Crosby when he came on the course and said...'I'm looking for John Derr'...and if he'd said he didn't know you, I'd know you had been blowing smoke."

What did he say, I asked her.

"He said he didn't know where you were but that you had eaten breakfast together today and you were wearing a brown jacket. Then he asked me if I would recognise you. I told him I thought I would - you were my brother."

I guess that told her. Fibbing? The very idea!!!

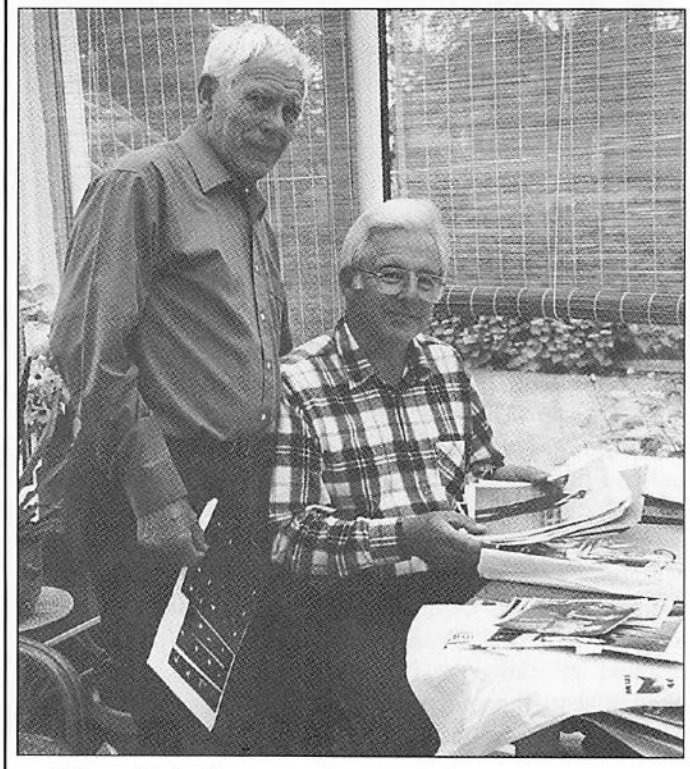
John Derr

(Editor: The press cutting also contained the news that a Crosby pub had opened in Winston-Salem. The newly renovated Ramada Plaza Hotel now houses the Crosby Pub "and the lavish sports bar features the Crosby name, which is synonymous with golf, sports and entertainment." This is nice to read.)

LEEDS '98

Ron Bosley, our Photographs Editor and Archivist, is the man to tell us what happened

Sunday October 4th dawned bright and clear, although the threat of rain was present, by the time that Vera and I, with passenger Gwen Harvey, set course for Roundhay Park to attend the 33rd Annual Meeting. Promptly at 3 p.m. secretary Michael (Crampton) made his usual speech of welcome, particular mention being made of new members, several of whom were present. A few moments silence was then observed in memory of members who had passed on during the past year. A special reference was made to Ralph Harding who has suffered a stroke and accident since last year's meeting. Ralph, who was present, assured members that he was on 'The Road to Recovery'. Other news of concern was the announcement that Keith Parkinson and his wife had been involved in a serious car accident and that although Keith was recovering well, his wife, Kath, had sustained more serious injuries. We hope that by the time that this appears in print, both Keith and Kath will be much better.

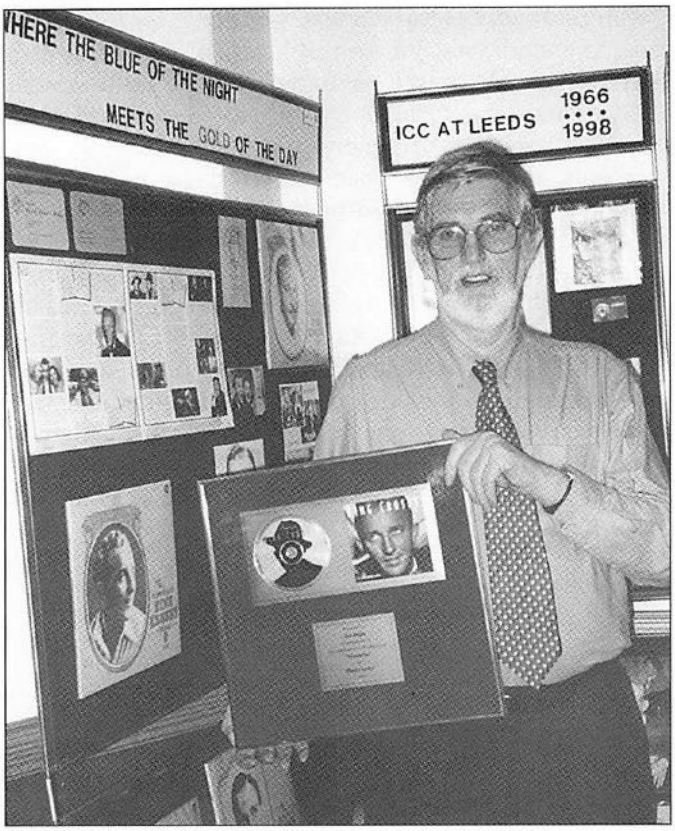


Editor Malcolm visits Ron Bosley's home to select photographs for this edition of BING.

During a discussion on club finances, a proposal was made and agreed that Les Gaylor be given life membership of the ICC, an honour well deserved. Paying tribute to the efforts of the management team, Editor Malcolm ended by giving a vote of thanks to Michael for his work as ICC secretary, aided in no small measure by wife Judy.

A video message of greetings from sunny Florida in the persons of Gord Atkinson and Rich Little was the next item, this being followed by the screening, in excellent

quality of the song excerpts from 'Top O' the Morning', something which many members had waited a long time to see, this being through the efforts of Jim Reilly. More pleasant moments followed with the display of a framed gold plated copy of the 'Memories' CD which had been presented to Jim by MCA in recognition of his efforts on the project.



Members listened spellbound as the 1935 versions of 'Silent Night' and the hitherto unissued version of 'White Christmas' were played from the new MCA double CD 'Bing Crosby: The Voice of Christmas'. Michael paid a handsome tribute to the work done by Wig Wiggins, not only on this CD issue but on so many other ICC activities as well. After the usual excellent meal, which had the benefit of the songs from the forthcoming CD 'More Memories' played in the background, George O'Reilly then gave, in his own inimitable way, an account of his dealings with the Crosby family in recent times which resulted in messages from Kathryn, Mary, Harry and Nathaniel to the meeting. Kathryn's fax, which was on The Crosby Bermuda Run paper, read:

> Dear George,
>
> I hope you and all of Bing's Special Friends have a wonderful time together. I wish I were with you.
>
> Love Kathryn

Harry Crosby's fax came from Claridge's in London and he said:-

> Dear George and all members of the Crosby Fan Club: I am sorry I am unable to attend your weekend meeting but I do want to express my gratitude and my family's appreciation of the continued work all of you have done in continuing my father's legacy. I have followed your newsletter and your kind notes through the years and want so very much to meet all of you soon. Dad is probably looking down with smiles.
> With all best wishes,
>
> Harry Crosby.

Mary Crosby, who has recently remarried and is now Mrs. Brodka, wrote:

> Hope you all have a wonderful time. Our family appreciates your work in keeping Dad's memory alive. With many thanks,
>
> Mary Crosby

Finally, Nathaniel's fax said:

> To all the friends and members of the International Crosby Circle. I send my warmest and best wishes to you today, the 4th of October, at your meeting of remembrance for my father. I hope you all have had a wonderful time.
>
> Sincerely, Nathaniel P. Crosby

Well done, George!

Members were then free to circulate and converse following the meal until Arnold Pope gave his ever popular quiz which was somewhat shorter than usual because of the time factor. A raffle, which raised over £80 for club funds, took place with the top prize being an interesting Bing clock which had been donated by Joe Cain with reproductions of the sheet music to 'I've Got The Girl' being subsidiary prizes. These excellent coloured reproductions had been prepared and donated by Trevor Wagstaff. The evening drew to a close as we watched video extracts of Bing's songs from film and TV which had been put together by Jim Reilly.

Approximately 60 members enjoyed the day's activities and we look forward to next year's meeting which is scheduled for Sunday 3rd. October.

Ron Bosley

On the Trail of Der Bingle

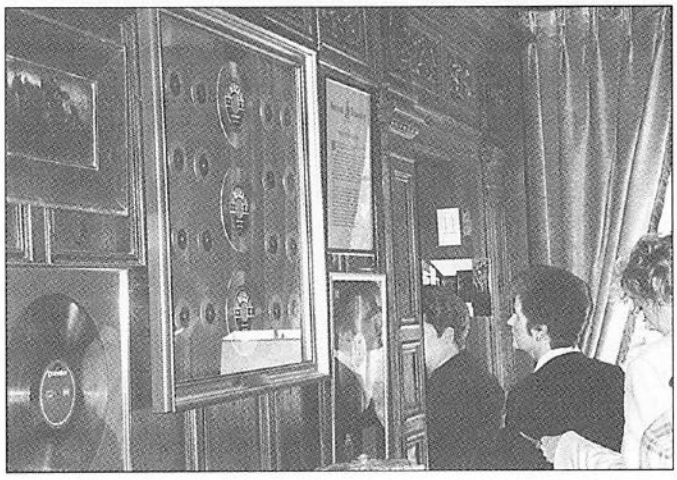
It's nice to hear from Roger Osterholm again as he tells us of his search for Crosbyana in California and of recent exciting developments.

Diane and I returned at the end of May from a two-week tour of California, including the wine country, Yosemite National Park, four days riding the cable cars of San Francisco, driving south to Carmel-by-the-Sea, Big Sur, Hearst's San Simeon, and Solvang, and then five days of Los Angeles. We enjoyed hundreds of harbor seals in San Francisco and even more sea lions along Big Sur. I was most pleased to have learned from BING magazine that Crosby's Hillsborough home would be open when my wife

and I would be passing that area.

We dined in Chinatown, at Fisherman's Wharf and at the St. Francis Hotel, Bing Crosby's Frisco haunt at Union Square. The main entrance to the hotel features pictures of many of the famous guests and Crosby's photos are on the right side of the entryway.

Luck was with us, for we found the 'open-house' that allowed us to tour Bing's Hillsborough home. I had published a 500-page book on Bing in 1994 with Greenwood Press. We had some more great luck, for at Hillsborough there was a "secret" shuttle bus without advertising, but a gas station clerk knew about it and told us where to get the bus. The visit cost each of us $30, but it was worth it to a Crosby fan. And I got some great photos. You may judge the great crowd that toured the mansion that day from the photo from the Summer issue of BING.



Some of the crowd touring the Crosby home.

The house certainly is a lavish mansion. Bing's study, upstairs front to the right, is a good size and in dark paneling. The great portrait in the downstairs sitting room of Bing holding a shotgun and standing beside one of his Labrador retrievers is excellent, although I was a bit amazed to find it was painted mainly in beige hues. It is not very colorful, unlike the subject.

We stopped at Carmel-by-the-Sea at Clint Eastwood's old saloon and his current restaurant, found plaques to Bing and his Pro-Am Golf Tournament at Pebble Beach, and driving in Los Angeles down Sunset Boulevard a few days later we stumbled across the Beverly Hills Hotel just in time to enjoy a lavish Sunday champagne brunch in the famed Polo Lounge, where Dixie Lee allegedly told someone back around 1948 that she was dying of cancer. A woman at the hotel desk told me that Crosby's Beverly Hills home was at 594 North Mapleton Drive, but I recalled it was at South Mapleton, and we soon found the site across the street from a putting range and near a large country club. Unfortunately, a super-rich man named Aaron Spelling has torn Crosby's house down and built one twice as large.

We toured the Holy Cross Cemetery in Culver City about ten miles southwest of Hollywood and found the graves of the Crosby family lying peacefully in the grotto. The grotto is on a hillside just inside the main gate, on a hill overlooking the city to the west. I was struck by how peaceful the grotto is, and took comfort in the feeling that Bing Crosby was resting easy in eternal peace. Nearby were the simple grave stones of other celebrities, like Rita Hayworth, Sharon Tate Polanski, Charles Boyer, and Bela Lugosi. We discovered several spots associated with the crooner on a walking tour of Paramount Pictures in Hollywood. Paramount, now much expanded from Bing's days there by including the historic Bronson Avenue out front and the R.K.O. Studio to the west, all in one big block backed by the famed Hollywood Cemetery, was exciting. We watched as one outlet was taping the TV show "Hard Copy" with beautiful Terry Murphy. Not permitted to take many photos, I still got one of a kiosk across the grass plot where the duo filmed a golfing sketch in Variety Girl, the pictures featuring Bing and Bob Hope in that film, and another photo at an outdoor display case showing Bing's golden Oscar. (Of course, the Hillsborough home, as well as Gonzaga University, also advertise that they hold the Oscar.) We discovered the spinet piano used by Crosby in both "Holiday Inn" and "Going My Way." The famed 'bungalows' lining one side of the grassy plot and behind that kiosk have all been turned into offices for independent producers. At Paramount we saw Jean-Claude Van Damme and met the actor who had played the young boy in the Addams Family TV show and films. We also found the graves of many other celebrities, like Cecil B. DeMille, at the neglected Hollywood Cemetery.

One day we rode a bus to the Mann's theater in upscale Manhattan Beach to watch the film "City of Angels" and discovered that the scene in which Nicolas Cage was attacked by a gang was the same spot near the Los Angeles Airport where we had caught the bus. We found the large cement slab of Bing's imprints at Mann's Chinese Theater (inscribed in 1936), one of Bing's stars on Vine Street, next to the decorated star of the recently-deceased Sinatra. We drove up to the Griffith Observatory and crawled along the fabled Mulholland Drive that rises high between Beverly Hills and San Fernando Valley.

The whole trip was most exciting, and we clicked more than 300 memorable photos.

****

In July, Cinetel Productions asked for my assistance in furnishing information for an upcoming program 'Legendary Hollywood Homes' for American Movie Classics on the home that Bing bought in 1936 at 10500 Camarillo Street in the Toluca Lake District near the Lakeside Golf Course. Bing sold his previous house to Al Jolson and Ruby Keeler. The new house was a 20-room mansion, not counting seven baths, and burned down on January 3, 1943 when it is said that the lights on the Christmas tree short-circuited. The house has been faithfully reconstructed.

I had a number of telephone conversations with Cinetel

I had a number of telephone conversations with Cinetel and then Michael Seligman of E! Entertainment Network called me to discuss Bing as a human being. He was not so sure that Bing was the monster that most people make of him today, and he was satisfied that I generally agreed with him and without being blind to a lot of weaknesses in Bing's character. But meanness was never one of them. So my association with the network increased until another producer there, Daniel Schwartz, invited me to fly to Hollywood to be filmed for a half hour instalment in the E! Network's series of "Mysteries and Scandals." Seligman and Schwartz produce many of the instalments for that series. The one on Crosby, however, would not be a mystery or scandal, except in that many people are so unfair to the man. The basic idea is that Bing was a good man who had some terrible turns in his life, including the suicide by shooting of two of his sons about 15 years after the crooner's death. Schwartz has made a firm offer for an expense paid trip to their headquarters on Wilshire Boulevard in Hollywood. The schedule is for me to leave Florida on Saturday, October 31, and return on Tuesday, November 3. They offered to put me up at the Beverly Plaza and to have a rental car ready for me at the Los Angeles Airport when I land. I was not at all reluctant when I accepted!

My schedule is to fly on Delta directly from Daytona Beach, Florida, to Hollywood on the Saturday afternoon, to spend hours taping on Sunday, when the studio would be available for hours of rambling, and then to fly home on Tuesday. I shall be able to get in a few hours on Monday with Cinetel for their production and arrangements have been made to show me the Crosby home on Camarillo and also for me to meet Phillip Crosby, who lives in Woodland Hills, not far from Toluca Lake. I shall report later on just what occurred. Cinetel's program on Bing's home will probably be shown at the end of January or early February. The one on E! may not air until the end of December or early January.

J. Roger Osterholm

(Editor: Exciting developments and we look forward to Roger's report in due course.)

Bing and The Beatles (and other things)

John Martin writes with some interesting tit-bits

I suppose I am one of the few ICC members who is also an admirer of the Beatles. (Not a favourite with some Crosby fans judging by comments in previous magazine letters) However, how many members of the ICC realise how much John Lennon was a real Bing Crosby fanatic. Copies of pages 211 and 227 from Yoko Ono's biography are reproduced below.

Page 211

For John's thirty-ninth birthday, on October 9, 1979, Yoko had bought an old bubble-top Wurlitzer jukebox, which John installed in a vacant room in the main apartment. Infatuated by the idea of having his own club - much as John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd had their private Blues Bar in downtown Manhattan - John decided to create the 'Club Dakota'. He filled the jukebox with records by Bing Crosby and Frankie Laine and other American singers of the 1940s and 1950s.....

Page 227

Some of John's tapes were in the room, on the floor near the bed. When television bored him, he listened to tapes of the old radio mystery, 'The Shadow', and old albums by Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Hank Williams, and, oh God, Bing Crosby; oh, how he loved Bing Crosby.

Sir George Martin (The Beatles musical director) also has said in the Beatles anthology how the title of the Beatles first No. 1 'Please, Please Me' was inspired by Bing's 1932 song 'Please'. Perhaps we should think of John Lennon as an honorary member of the ICC? So Bing's influence didn't just relate to singers of the Sinatra / Como era!

Incidentally, The Times of August 15 published a list of the "100 All-Time Family Favourites" which had had come from a survey of 5,000 music fans of all ages and tastes undertaken by the British Market Research Bureau magazine. I was delighted to see Bing at number 13 and I think it is remarkable that he has done so well after all these years. No doubt he would have been top in a poll 50 years ago. The top 20 were:

1 The Beatles	11 George Michael
2 Elvis Presley	12 Nat King Cole
3 Frank Sinatra	13 Bing Crosby
4 Queen	14 Michael Jackson
5 Elton John	15 Shirley Bassey
6 Celine Dion	16 Jim Reeves
7 Cliff Richard	17 The Rolling Stones
8 Oasis	18 Simply Red
9 Luciano Pavarotti	19 Rod Stewart
10 Phil Collins	20 Madonna

None of the 'new' breed of singers who took over in the early 50s have a single vote between them e.g. Frankie Laine, Guy Mitchell, Johnny Ray, Doris Day, Jo Stafford - all apparently forgotten. I don't think Jolson fans will be too happy either as he is not included in top 100.

Finally, and on a complete different topic, nobody could sing a country and western song better than Bing. A fact acknowledged in 'The History of Country Music' by Bob Millard (published in the USA). Editor Malcolm reproduces an extract below and it is another tribute to the commendable versatility of Bing. A CD would be more than welcome.

John Martin

Bing Crosby: "Thank God I'm a Country Boy!"

Country and Western music, as the multiplicity of country styles became known in the entertainment industry in the 1930s, had broad appeal outside the rural audience, though rarely was a 'country' artist marketed beyond that niche. The so-called "sophisticated" tastes of the urban

audience would be tickled by country and western songs if they were sung by pop stars, such as Bing Crosby.

Crosby was a remarkably adaptable singer throughout his career, and he proved it in the 1930s and 1940s by including country and western tunes in his repertoire on a regular basis. Many of the songs were pop covers of country hit singles, while others were original western flavoured numbers. The first of Crosby's western hits of this period came in 1933 when the crooner was appearing in the Ziegfeld Follies. He recorded the Billy Hill-penned Gene Autry hit "The Last Roundup" from the show and reached the #2 position in the pop charts. There were no country charts in the 1930s, so Crosby's success might be taken as a token of how broadly popular the Western image was in America and how much appeal country music could have when allowed to reach beyond the audience it was typically limited to. Gene Autry and Roy Acuff also periodically showed up in the pop charts in 1930s and 1940s as well, but few other country artists made the charts, regardless of sales.

Crosby's country and western hits of the 1930s and 1940s, ranging from #2 in the charts to the Top 25, included:
- "The Last Roundup" 1933
- "Home on the Range" 1933
- "I'm an Old Cowhand" 1936
- "Empty Saddles" 1936
- "My Little Buckaroo" 1937
- "There's a Gold Mine in the Sky" 1938
- "Mexicali Rose" 1938
- "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" 1940
- "Along the Santa Fe Trail" 1941
- "New San Antonio Rose" 1941
- "You Are My Sunshine" 1941
- "Deep in the Heart of Texas" 1942
- "Pistol Packin' Mama" 1943
- "Riders in the Sky" 1949

reproduced from 'The History of Country Music' by Bob Millard to whom we give a grateful acknowledgement. The reference to Bing appearing in the Ziegfeld Follies in 1933 is incorrect.

ONCE IN A WHILE

The obituary section of the magazine.

Roy Rogers, the singing cowboy died in July at the age of 86. Born Leonard Slye in Cincinnati in 1911, he dropped out of high school to help support his family and became a truck driver. After a spell in California as a fruit picker, he learned to sing and play guitar and he formed a singing group, The Sons of the Pioneers which enjoyed some success and in fact appeared in Bing's 1936 film *Rhythm on the Range.* He changed his name to Roy Rogers and his big break came when he replaced Gene Autry in the film *Under Western Stars.* Over the next few years, in conjunction with his horse Trigger, he became known as the 'King of the Cowboys' and a hero to children everywhere through films such as *Billy the Kid Returns, King of the Cowboys* and *Springtime in the Sierras.* With his second wife, Dale Evans, he made 35 movies and appeared in a long running television show. Apart from his film career, Roy licensed his name to a chain of restaurants and this produced a very good income for him after his retirement from the movies. Roy appeared with Bing on the Kraft Music Hall of June 29,1944 and whilst they are both shown as appearing in the Bob Hope film *Son of Paleface* in fact the Bing content was simply a clip from *Just for You.* Hit records were surprisingly few although Roy had some success with 'Hi-Yo, Silver' in 1938 and with 'Think of Me' in 1943. Roy is survived by Dale Evans, six children, 15 grandchildren and 33 great-grandchildren.

Gene Autry died in October at the age of 91 and it was somewhat ironic that he passed away so close to his big rival Roy Rogers. He started his working life as a radio telegraph operator in Oklahoma and one night in the late 1920s whilst strumming his guitar in the office, the great Will Rogers heard him and told him to get into radio which he duly did. In 1934 Autry got into westerns and his career as a singing cowboy really took off. He made over 90 films but always said that he was not an actor, more a personality. After war time service as a Sergeant in the Army Air Corps, he became a key player on the early 50's TV scene with his horse Champion and he also enjoyed several hit records, the most notable being 'Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer' in 1949 which eventually went on to sell over 8 million copies. He became a most successful businessman whose most high profile investment was the Los Angeles Angels baseball club. I cannot see that he and Bing ever worked together and in fact they were rivals on record. Bing and Gene competed with songs such as 'The Last Round-up', 'Tumbling Tumbleweeds', 'Goodbye Little Darlin' Goodbye', 'Be Honest With Me (the latter two partly written by Autry) and 'You Are My Sunshine' apart from 'Rudolph'. Of course, we all remember how Bing mentioned Gene in his recording of 'Clementine' and wondered whether he would sue him! Also in 'Road to Rio', Bing and Bob Hope pretend to be Frank Sinatra and Gene Autry. Amazing that Bing and Gene did not cross each others paths more often.

E.G. Marshall - the actor died at the age of 88 in August. He won two Emmys as the senior lawyer in the TV series 'The Defenders' and appeared in many films such as 'Twelve Angry Men', 'The Bridge at Remagen' and 'Superman II'. His last film appearance was in the Clint Eastwood movie 'Absolute Power'. He appeared with Bing in the 1957 film 'Man on Fire' when he played Bing's attorney.

Kay Thompson, who spent several years at MGM as an arranger (The Harvey Girls, Till The Clouds Roll By) and as a coach to Judy Garland, died in July. She appeared in 'Funny Face' with Fred Astaire and with her radio choir, she was featured in the 1937 film 'Manhattan Merry-Go-Round'. With the Three Rhythm Kings, she appeared with Bing in several Woodbury shows beginning on November 27, 1933 and running through until February 1934. She turned up again on Bing's Philco show of November 12, 1947 with the Williams Brothers (including Andy).

Barrett Deems - once known as the world's

aged 84. Deems was with Joe Venuti's orchestra from 1937 to 1944 and went on to join Jimmy Dorsey's Orchestra. He was invited to join Louis Armstrong and the All Stars in 1954 which led to him being immortalised in Bing's song 'Now You Has Jazz' from 'High Society'.

Leonid Kinskey, the veteran character actor died in September at the age of 95. Known as the mad Russian of films and TV, he appeared as Mischa in 'Rhythm on the Range' when he took part in the singing of 'I'm an Old Cowhand'.

Jimmie Driftwood - folk singer and songwriter died in July at the age of 91. Famous for the 1959 hit 'Battle of New Orleans', his link with Bing is that he sang several songs on Bing's album 'How the West Was Won'.

E. G. Marshall with Bing and Inger Stevens in 'Man on Fire'

Bert Bishop's BING ON THE BOX

With digital television now with us and the restructuring of the Sky movies package, one wonders exactly what is in store for viewers of vintage films. I wouldn't be surprised should it prove that ninety per cent of the satellite name changes are just hype and that the underlying principles for each channel remain. 'That which we call a rose by any other name ...' etc., or, as they say these days, 'The more things change the more they remain the same'! However, from Thursday 10th. September the three major movie channels have been retitled as Sky Premier, Sky Movie Max and Sky Cinema, each being categorised, broadly, as: First screening, blockbusters and box-office hits / Mainstream movies / Ageless classics from the last five decades. By this definition the latter group - Sky Cinema - would therefore exclude anything prior to 1950. If this proves to be the case the outlook for aficionados of earlier Crosby movies, and vintage musicals in general, looks decidedly bleak. TNT remains unchanged, but sadly for us they have contractual rights only for the Warner Brothers and MGM libraries. A lot of very good films there but very little of our man. In the words of Mr. Asquith we must 'wait and see'.

Digital television will be a distinct advantage, though. Being a purer method of transmitting and receiving, it should enhance picture quality and will eliminate atmospheric interference. But one still has to be within a specified area for best reception, and if a good analogue picture is currently available viewers may not be overly impressed without state of the art receivers; though I'm sure that this will be expanded and improved upon. However, many more channels will be able to be transmitted allowing very selective viewing. For example, the Sky Digital Service will be able to include a further eight movie channels! Everything comes at a price, of course. But, it is hoped that the new 'magic box' needed to sit a-top your original one will gradually reduce in price as most goods of this nature do in the fullness of time.

It doesn't seem that long ago when BLUE SKIES on British television was a non-event, happily, it now runs second only to HIGH SOCIETY in recent times. With the welcome screening on the terrestrial channel of the second of the Father O'Malley films it might be said that the following selections include and represent just about the best of the mid-term cinematic Crosbyana. It is interesting to note that STAGECOACH was screened on a channel now described, in this film's case, as showing box-office hits. My own opinion (though not derisory, as is Halliwell's 'Absolutely awful remake') would not go along with the suggestion that it rated as a hit; mainly because it was always going to suffer by comparison with an undisputed classic.

How welcome to see, or rather hear, Bing back on the small screen on an advertisement. And how galling that having just paused my VCR during the break of a film I was taping that, from the kitchen, and over the sound of a singing kettle, I heard his voice, along with the Andrews Sisters, promoting the delights of Center Parcs with the catchy Cole Porter number "Don't Fence Me In". It's about time that somebody somewhere compiled a schedule for forthcoming advertisements - for I still haven't managed to record it! Time, too, perhaps, that some enterprising ICC Member issued a video tape of all of Bing's television advertisements from both sides of the pond.

Bing on the stagecoach with Red Buttons and Michael Connors

JULY

BLUE SKIES	Sky Movies Gold	11th

AUGUST

ROAD TO UTOPIA	Sky Movies Gold	10th

SEPTEMBER

HIGH SOCIETY	TNT	4th 5th 10th 18th 25th 9th
THE BELLS OF ST MARY'S	BBC2	10th

OCTOBER

STAGECOACH	Sky Premier	7th
ROAD TO SINGAPORE	Sky Cinema	6th
ROAD TO ZANZIBAR	Sky Cinema	7th
SON OF PALEFACE	Sky Cinema	27th

HOLLYWOOD HALL OF FAME

Immediately prior to the showing of 'ZANZIBAR' on Sky Cinema a very welcome 25 minute biography of Bing in the Hall Of Fame series was screened. This followed on from the previous day's transmission of Bob Hope's biography which preceded 'SINGAPORE'. At this time the

biography which preceded 'SINGAPORE'. At this time the presenter is not known, but he began the tribute with the words: 'Singer, actor, comedian and all round entertainer, Bing Crosby was one of the most beloved figures in Hollywood history. His distinctive, lilting singing style and unruffled demeanour carried him through a career that lasted decades and brought him success after success.'

What followed was, by necessity, a very condensed look at the remarkable career of Bing, the man and his music as portrayed on both the large screens of the movie theatres and the much smaller screens of our living rooms beginning, almost inevitably, with the wrong birth year and date. That's nit picking, though, for the clips of Bing's early years in show business were authentic enough and mostly known to Crosbyphiles everywhere; though the short sequence of him cavorting in costume as part of a trio comprising himself, Frank McHugh and Charles Butterworth is not that common. Sennett was soon on the scene with SING, BING, SING, including the hilarious car chase involving the gorilla, and Bing crooning in the clouds from the confines of a cockpit to Florine McKinney with an airborne version of "Snuggled On Your Shoulder". Another rare sequence was of Bing chatting to Mary Pickford - she having been listening to Bing on her car radio and just driven up to a studio where he has been recording. Their conversation is of the mutual admiration society type, leading to promises of plugs for each other on screen and wireless.

Family shots followed - Bing with Dixie and the boys - before leading into the Road films and association with Hope and Sinatra during the war years, noting along the way that Crosby raised $14,000,000 in war bonds. Bing on the golf course and at the races pointed up his leisure activities, slotted in before covering his Oscar award for the Father O'Malley role and later nomination for THE COUNTRY GIRL. Then it was the turn of HIGH SOCIETY and the famous duet with Frank Sinatra though, lamentably, no mention of Satchmo in the entire programme. Coverage of Bing's television years was considerable; both guesting and on his own show. Jack Benny getting most of the action among the Hope - Martin - Sinatra - Burns appearances. From his January 1954 show Bing sang "It Had To Be You" with accompaniment by Buddy Cole; and "The Gypsy In My Soul" from the Jack Benny TV show of March 1954. Sadly lacking, but taking in to consideration that this was a Tinsel Town tribute, no reference to his gramophone recording career. However, there was a final tribute worth putting into print:
"To his fans, and those who knew and loved him, he was a living legend. Bing Crosby will remain in the hearts of Hollywood and America for ever."

UNCLE BING

As part of BBC's sporting programme GRANDSTAND's 40th. anniversary on the 10th. October this autumn, a clip was shown of Bing placing his bet on the horse Uncle Bing while guesting on a 'live broadcast' on the 22nd. February 1975. Many will recall that the nag romped home. Hardly surprising, then, that The Old Groaner had already titled his autobiography 'Call Me Lucky'!

MUSIC BOX

..... Magical Memories, Sundown, String Of Pearls, As Time Goes By; these are just some of the alluring titles designed to entice you away from Logie's seemingly pernicious invention to the less demanding delights of the wireless set. Not that I'm suggesting that one shouldn't be wholly attentive. It does mean, though, that immobility is not a requisite and that listening in the car, being busy about the house, or just relaxing in the garden is no deterrent. Nor should the visually impaired be forgotten - indeed our Membership includes some such - a few quite seriously so. For them, especially, the radio is a lifeline. With strong support from a few members, cassettes featuring segments of these pleasurably titled and entertaining interludes turn up at chez moi in sufficient abundance to keep me well occupied around that time of each four-monthly cycle when the copy deadline looms. Added to which, listening time within the boundaries of my modest tuner also contributes considerably to this pleasurable task. The difference being that what I hear as it happens is a realistic mix of Bing alongside many hours of other artistes, whereas the incoming cassettes are almost one hundred per cent Mr. C. This tends to give a false impression of the frequency of Crosby recordings on the various presenters' shows, and while some, like Chris Robinson and Desmond Carrington, do feature Bing very regularly others are infrequent delvers into the Crosby archives.

Among the minor league players are Dewi Griffiths, Tony Beard and David Lowe who feature, respectively, on BBC Wales, Devon and Bristol. Given a spin by these three gents have been "It Happened In Monterey" - to celebrate Rosie Clooney's 70th. birthday on 28th. May; "Now You Has Jazz", for no other very good reason than it's an all-time classic; "Indian Summer" and "Ole Buttermilk Sky" from Philco, which, along with Chesterfield and G.E.C., is an excellent source of inspired entertainment much of which has been, and will be, released on compact disc. From the focal point of the Severn seas came a nice selection that included "Around The World", "The Way You Look Tonight" and the very rarely heard "Where My Caravan Has Rested", later backed up with the original 78 rpm coupling of Godard's Jocelyn theme known, simply, as "Lullaby". Both these latter were listener requests remembered from times past and, also noting the Jascha Heifetz violin accompaniment, well praised by David Lowe who, on the last encounter with his programme, featured the plaintive Leo Robin / Ralph Rainger number "Here Lies Love" from THE BIG BROADCAST, sung in that film by both Bing and Arthur Tracy. Around the 14th. October David included a few Crosby songs to mark the 21st. anniversary of his demise. These included "I'll Follow You", "How Deep Is The Ocean" - actually recorded on the 14th October - and "Too Marvellous For Words". This latter title as a particular and personal 'thank you' tribute to the indefatigable Maggie Ryan who, according to David, 'works 25 hours a day in the cause of Crosby' and has kept him well stocked up with all the latest on the Bing scene - and other artistes, too. Maggie wanted it to be said here that many other members are similarly involved and that we all appreciate their efforts.

Anne Hopper is the lady who chairs the programme heading this part of the column, and whilst her Crosby tracks don't quite stretch back into that wonderful, pre-war decade her selections are in turn, kaleidoscopic, musical and invariably humorous. Often a combination of all three. Falling into the latter category is "Hand Holding Music" from a 1949 Philco show wherein Bing's guests were Walter O'Keefe and Rudy Vallee, and on which the performers were sounding as though they were having just as much fun as the audience. Surely, it was this jovial cordiality with his guests, as much as the man and his music, that made Bing's programmes so popular. Being the recipient of the Readers' Digest 4-CD set from the States she has been dipping into that for inspirational excerpts from the Crosby broadcasts and raided the wireless archives for an appropriate piece to pay tribute to the recently deceased Roy Rogers. On his appearance on a Kraft Music Hall, in full cowboy regalia, he had the best throwaway line when in response to Bing's comment, 'Nice of you to dress up.' replied 'I thought one of us should.'

More non-commercial release items have included Bing and Burl Ives with an amusingly spirited rendition of "Careless Love"; Cros's fluffed start alternate take of "Put It There Pal"; Bing and Rosie with tracks from the 'Hey! Look Us Over!' CD; and that perennial favourite with presenters, "Slow Boat To China", with Benny Goodman's one-time chanteuse. (They must have arrived by now surely!)

A couple of tracks with Donald O'Connor - "If There's Anybody Here" and "Back In The Old Routine" - were a welcome change in the duet stakes, but Anne had better be advised by local listeners that Bing and Johnny Mercer did indeed make commercial recordings together. The "Mr. Gallagher And Mr. Shean" that she featured was not radio (although they did duet a medley parody of it on TV in 1960) and there were three other classics from that time, plus the two Ken Barnes' tracks in the 'Seventies. Being seven in all if you count "Lazy River" on which Johnny sings just the one line.

Can anyone identify 'The Badger'? A regular listener and requester of Crosby on Judith Ley's 'Sundown' programme that emanates from the T.T. Races island, he is always mentioned along the lines of .... especially for 'The Badger and all Bing Crosby fans'. A particular instance was for the track "So Would I". A wistful number by Bing here accompanied by Russ Morgan in Victor Young mode. Dating from 1946, and composed by Burke and Van Heusen, it is so similar in style and intimation that one wonders if lyricist Johnny Burke hadn't some unused material left over from a decade previously when he collaborated with Arthur Johnston with the similarly titled "So Do I", written for the film PENNIES FROM HEAVEN. Also featuring "Melancholy Baby", "Indian Summer" and "Moonlight Becomes You", it may be deduced that Ms Ley's programme - late night into the early hours - tends towards the romantic rather than the rousing or risible.

FRANK WAPPAT AND THE REGULARS

Still working wonders with his 78rpm records the Tyneside broadcaster continues to entertain his listeners with a lot of vintage material. Bing and the Andrews Sisters seem to have been in favour with Frank recently. Mainly with a western theme, as "Along The Navajo Trail" and "The Three Caballeros" would suggest. With the release of several Louis Jordan discs - an ongoing situation since the success of the FIVE GUYS NAMED MO stage production - it is not to be wondered at that he crops up with Crosby from time to time on these collections; though "Your Socks Don't Match" seems to be favoured always over "My Baby Said Yes"' - their only other collaboration. Frank featured 'Socks'; and found an appropriate spot for "The Kiss In Your Eyes". He also responded favourably to a listener request for "The Isle Of Innisfree" from 'Bing Crosby - His Irish Collection'. Is Innisfree fictional or real? Certainly there's an Inishfree in Donegal; but it is oft suggested that the Innisfree of this song is actually one of the Scottish islands.

Both Keith Fordyce and Hubert Gregg include Bing in their broadcasts from time to time, and the latter featured a couple of tracks from radio ("To Prove That I'm In Love", with Patti Page and "Manhattan", the duet with Connie Boswell) around the time of Bob Hope's Honorary Knighthood. 'I wonder what Bing would have had to say!', mused Gregg. No doubt some affectionately witty put-down. The only named Crosby Corner now, though, is to be found on the Sunday midday 'Say It With Music' programme hosted by Desmond Carrington. He was one of the first to feature tracks from the 'Some Fine Old Chestnuts/New Tricks' CD; namely "I Can't Give You Anything But Love", and "Rain" of which, and in the best tradition of Bing's line 'Listen to, well, you know who.' in HIGH SOCIETY apropos Satchmo, Desmond said 'I've no need to tell you who this is - so I won't.' However, on another occasion, thought it appropriate to note that Bing was part of the group involved in the infectious "Happy Feet". The wah-wah trombone on a more typical Russ Morgan accompaniment to Bing's "Helpless", along

with "Two Cigarettes In The Dark"; "Misty"; "I've A Shooting Box In Scotland" and "Hangin' Loose" prompts me to consider a bar to Desmond's previous N.T.B.O.B. award.

Sunday afternoons now have two new presenters from a couple of years or so ago. With the demise of Alan Dell and, this year, Benny Green two stalwarts of popular music have been hard to replace. Russell Davies fills the latter's shoes, though with a different format and approach. Still thematic, but more about music generally than composers particularly, and described as 'An hour of classics and curiosities'. Whereas Benny Green could be caustically witty, when the occasion arose, Mr. Davies often lapses into cynicism. A disagreeable trait which I hope that he will veer away from. Of "Country Style" - 'A complete put up job. Crosby was no more a country boy than Sinatra.' And of "Ain't got A Dime To My Name" - 'The sound of Bing claiming poverty is piquant at the very least.' Neither remark being spoken with any kind of levity. Other artistes have had similar comments aimed at them. When might I ask, was it required of a performer to be the character in the song? It would have certainly put paid to "I'm An Old Cowhand", "I Got Plenty Of Nuttin', "We're A Couple Of Soldiers", "I've Been Working On The Railroad", and "I Haven't Time To Be A Millionaire" - to say nothing of "We Three Kings Of Orient Are"! Write your own list! However, Russell Davies is fairly knowledgeable for all that and only last Sunday, as I type this, presented an interesting programme on torch songs and singers, and crooners in general. From the film 'TOO MUCH HARMONY' Russell played "(All The World Is Singing) Boo-Boo-Boo" which was almost certainly lifted from Geoff Milne's Jasmine CD 'Going Hollywood' - a nice album which it is hoped Mr. Davies will draw more from. "Side By Side" has also been heard on his programme, so much to hope for from this new Sunday afternoon presenter on Radio 2.

SUNDAY LATE SHOW

Lots of good stuff from Chris 'Family Show' Robinson, as always. The South & West region of the BBC benefits considerably from his likeable programme, on which the 'Mystery Year' quiz is a regular feature. Bing often figures in this, though earlier recordings were not quite so vintage as in the past; getting stuck in 1944 for a half-dozen tracks which included "Ac-cent-tchu-ate The Positive", "Don't Fence Me In", "It's Been A Long, Long Time" and the currently ubiquitous alternate take of "Put It There, Pal". However, "Yodelin' Jive", "Muskrat Ramble" and "Pick Yourself Up" extended those years a little; and for Christine, who sits on a BBC Advisory Council in that region, and favours our kind of music, "The Isle Of Innisfree", especially for her birthday. I had the pleasure of meeting up with Christine at Maggie Ryan's whilst holidaying in the West Country last August. Both very dedicated and likeable ladies who carry a torch for Crosby and associated music.

In recent broadcasts the 'Mystery Year' was clearly 1931, for he played both "I Surrender, Dear" and the rarer -B take of "Where The Blue Of The Night". The former track, with its very unusual introduction and arrangement generally - by Gus Arnheim, was played 67 years on from when, as Chris relayed, Bing was unable to make his first national broadcast because of laryngitis. Now more likely to be considered as a case of 'liquid laryngitis', as reputedly witnessed by Gary Stevens who was present at the studio. But never mind; we have a couple of historic recordings to savour whatever the situation. Chris also used Carman Cavallero and Les Paul accompanied tracks as clues for 1945 and 1946, noting along the way that Les Paul was the front runner in the electric guitar field. 'The Sunday Late Show' is a good friend to the Crosby cause.

SOME OTHER FELLA

Now that Barnsey at the Beeb is partially re-established in the Essex region a lot more 'as it happens' good music has come my way. Whereas before the incoming cassettes concentrated on Crosby I now hear as much of it as is available - usually. This is a fine programme that has great variety, ranging from the sultry chanteuse through jazz, swing, mood music and the best of British bands, vocal and non-vocal, and beyond, to the priceless comedy of the inimitable Jimmy Durante and others of similar ilk too humorous to mention.

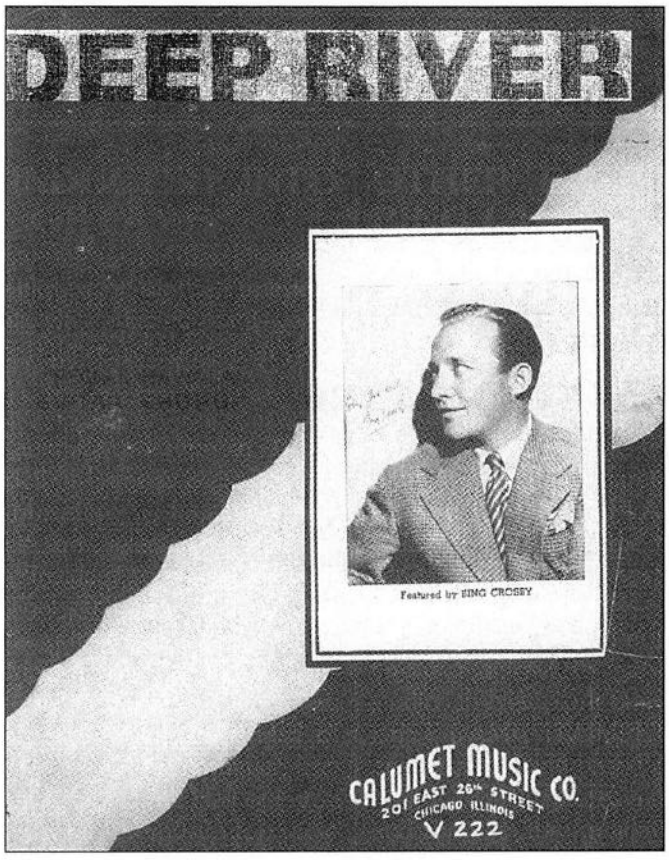
In my last article I incorrectly wrote that Paul had successfully negotiated for the return of Barnsey At The Beeb to the Essex airwaves. This was not true. In a letter sent out to known listeners to 'spread the word' Paul added a paragraph to me explaining that the extension of the Sunday programme was a matter of BBC policy. 'They asked me. I was happy to accept', he wrote. Two very significant sentences also appear in his letter, as follows:

"The survival of any programme depends on its ratings."

"When it comes to audience figures there is so much at stake."

Therefore you have been urged to write to local papers, magazines, the BBC's Feedback on Radio 4, local programme managers, etc., advising them of your satisfaction with, and the need for, this programme specifically (and, by name, others cast in the same mould of course).

On to the music. The three calendar sheet music illustrations for the past period have been described in detail and appropriate tracks played. As no known recording by Bing of "Deep River" exists we were treated to two for the price of one for the month of July: "Deep Purple" and "Rhythm On The River". An imaginative alternative that was expanded upon for the August ornamental artwork illustrating "Two In Love" by playing "Moonstruck", "Moonburn" and "Moonglow"! No problems for September. Though Paul expressed the opinion that "Day Dreaming" was a difficult song which Bing handled very well. Vintage Cros was represented by "Mississippi Mud - I Left My Sugar Standing In The Rain" -3; the one on which Bing speaks the line 'Irregardless and respective', an alternative and rather hokey version of 'Irrespective and regardless' on Take -2. But we're talking Rhythm Boys here where the happy sound of their scat



singing and dialogue paid no homage to grammar. Then for a celebration of Gus Arnheim's birthday on to the Cocoanut Grove and the 'live' recording of "What Is It?", featuring ....'some bloke who you may recognise' that comes complete with cross dialogue and interpolations from Jack Oakie. Paul expressed the opinion that the latter acted in 'THE KID'; but that was Jackie Coogan, and I should know because my Mum decided that I would have a 'Jackie Coogan' haircut even years after the famous film. The fact that it was virtually a 'pudding basin' job which could be accomplished at home at no expense, rather than being still fashionable, might well have been the principle reason for this matriarchal insistence on a Coogan coiffure.

"I Apologise", "One More Time" and "Love Is Just Around The Corner" were also early entries, with Barnsey favourites Johnny Mercer, "Small Fry" and "Mr Meadowlark" being aired (twice) shortly after the demise of Benny Green, who was also a great Mercer fan. Paul quoted freely from Benny's credo, which he applies to his own programme; and with acknowledgement to Benny's expertise and craft went on to say; "Nostalgia is okay, though only if applied right. But never lose sight of the intrinsic merit of the music. This programme is nothing to do with an older person's sentimentalities; it has nothing to do with nostalgia. This is not a nostalgia programme. I simply play the best tunes by the best performers. If they happen to be dead and gone that's not my fault."

The zany humour of Spike Jones and His City Slickers may not be everyone's cup of tea, but I had my small collection of 78s around that time and will be forever grateful to the mad drummer for introducing me to Tchaikovsky's 'Nutcracker Suite' through his not too excruciating interpretations of that work. Here he was accompanying Bing with "Love In Bloom" on the Gold For Grown-Up's programme, though with this excerpt from the second show in the 1946 Philco series a suggestion of a question mark hangs in the air! Perhaps the later played Jimmy Lunceford - Willie Smith classic "I'm Nuts About Screwy Music" might have been more appropriate as a sub-text to the programme's title - as Barnsey suggested in another instance! "Don't ever leave me John Scott Trotter!" was Bing's cry from the heart at the conclusion of the song in the original programme, but I think that this has been cut from the release.

The 8th. July saw the birthday of Louis Jordan, and who better to celebrate it with than the man whose sartorial inadequacies are legendary and whose colour blindness might well have inspired the famous mismatched hosiery number. Introduced as being by Louis Jordan and His Tympany Five, and 'some other fella', this is also an early possession on 78. What a delightful and irresistible track. A typical Jordan presentation and delivery with an amusingly inventive lyric that I'm sure we all know, and love, word for word; including the gag about Hope and that excruciating rhyming couplet 'Boy, your lisle is vile and your cotton is rotten!'! 'Ah! the joy of Socks'.

The even more famous Louis hasn't been overlooked either. The wireless version of "Gone Fishin'", and the Porter pair "Little One" ('beautifully embellished') and "Now You Has Jazz" gave The Boss the opportunity to share his talent.

Quite a number of programmes feature quizzes these days and 'Barnsey At The Beeb' is no exception. It's an ongoing policy, with a recent one requesting listeners to state who was the older of the two most famous Crosby sons. This brought a 100% correct response from the many entries; the three winners each receiving a compact disc. "When My Dreamboat Comes Home", featuring both the showbiz siblings, was clearly an appropriate item to play when the draw was made. Pete Tullet, won a CD as a special prize with his amusing rhyme on the quiz that included the lines 'Bing's the one his mum first saw / Back in nineteen hundred and four'. Yours truly felt compelled to correct the error and sent Paul a revamped version, read on the air, which, at the specific request of our Editor, now follows:

'Who's the older, Bob or Bing / The answer is an easy thing. / Bing's the first his mum would see, / Back in nineteen hundred and three. / Bob didn't appear upon the scene / 'Till nineteen hundred and thirteen. / For Pete to win his free CD / He should have bought the 'Diary'! / In gold perhaps its weight is worth / Not only for Bing's year of birth. / For even Paul is at a loss / Without his tome about The Boss.'

Byron, Shelly, Keats - eat your heart out!

"La Mer" by the American Jean Sablon - or should that be the other way around? - was among many other tracks featured on 'Gold For Grown-ups'. Too many to mention here, but I have to include a rarely heard track, "The Whistler's Mother-in-law", which does for Bing's other

great love, fishing, what "Tomorrow's My Lucky Day" does for golf - and "Hello, Mom" a favourite of the aeronautical Barnsey who recently flew over Osea island, just up the creek from me, on his way to 'beat up' 'Sarfend' airport, before landing there in remembrance of Battle Of Britain weekend. Though I must impress that his Gower-esque display, before touchdown, at this popular airfield is entirely my own invention. Perfectly true, though, that we are lucky to have the evangelistic ICC member/presenter from Norwich spreading the Crosby gospel according to Paul. Though canonisation may not be entirely appropriate just yet. All those double brandies!

SKUES ME

It was once written that listeners to Keith's programme were those whose names were no longer heard at the font. True or false, these unfashionably christened folk are treated to a nightly farrago of unconnected musical items played directly from 78rpm records through to the latest in technical transmission and reproduction. One of those programmes that, in less capable hands, can fail by trying to please everyone but end up pleasing no one. The impeccable sincerity of Skuesey, though, holds his vast listening audience in thrall by a naive magnetism that is hard to define, and which keeps the 'phone-in lines constantly engaged. Happily, Mr. Bing Crosby (he always gets his full moniker) is invariably featured - often in connection with an anagram or quiz - and always with what appears to be an almost dispassionate respect for Bing's status. The range of Crosbyana reflects the programme as a whole, and this time around includes "Did You Ever See A Dream Walking"; "Red Sails In The Sunset"; "Ol' Man River" from the Buddy Cole sessions; "The Touch Of Your Lips", "My Buddy" and "Thoroughly Modern Millie" - and you don't get to hear those last two very often. One unintentional but amusing comment on the programme came when we heard Les Reed expounding Ken Barnes' influence in promoting our kind of music and the wonderful talent of Crosby and Astaire: 'All credit to his elbow', he said of Ken!

Keith has been playing some of the best commercial Crosby you're ever likely to hear on the wireless, and one of the rarest was "I Found A Million Dollar Baby" direct from a Decca label UK 78rpm. Afterwards, Stan White came on the air, via telephone, to query the disc and explain that during the war re-pressed records often had to have these Decca labels as no paper was available to reprint what should have been the Brunswick image. Clearly a collector's item from among Keith's library of close to quarter of a million records. Keith also played a version of "Dear Hearts And Gentle People" which was stated to be a Bing track. It might well have fooled some casual listeners not terribly acquainted with the Crosby voice but, fortunately, Stan was on hand again to set the record straight. The consequence of which being that Keith, explaining by way of contrition that the BBC LP stated Bing Crosby on the label, also played our man's million seller back to back. Clearly, in today's parlance, a cover version.

From Bill Wesley comes the following: 'I woke early on Sunday, 27th. September and switched my wireless on to Radio 4 and immediately heard Bing singing his 1931 recording of "I Apologise". It was on a religious programme entitled 'Something Understood', wherein Denis Tuohy was discussing repentance. 'The record was played all the way through, and I was thrilled to hear him illustrating the theme for the day with Bing.' The broadcast went out at 6.05am and again in the evening at 11.30pm. Well done, Bill, for noting this very interesting use of the Crosby voice - and for being awake and compos mentis at this pre-dawn hour of a Sunday morning.

BIG BAND TO BROADWAY

Meanwhile, over in the States, another Sunday morning programme had been giving Bing considerable exposure. We've heard from Rich Michaels' BIG BAND TO BROADWAY a few times before, when he has Greg Van Beek on hand to help with the selections and provide the inside info on the Crosby career. Greg, at the age of 26, being a Contributing Editor of the American Club Crosby's BINGANG magazine is one of the newer fellas' who will be flying the flag into the second half of the next century - we hope. Rich's two hour programme goes out on AM 1470 WBKV in the West Bend, Wisconsin area and on the mornings of 20th and 27th. September featured a commercial recording from every one of Bing's major movies, starting with "Please" from THE BIG BROADCAST through to his last film song "Don't Be A Do-Badder" from ROBIN AND THE 7 HOODS. Three and a half hours of the Crosby voice involving some sixty tracks! At the commencement of the programme Greg regaled their listeners with some of the remarkable facts about Bing's illustrious movie career, and throughout both mornings engaged in anecdotal conversation with his host to ensure that no little snippet of interest regarding the films and songs was overlooked. Greg concentrated on the less obvious tracks for much of the time, giving listeners the chance to hear, for example, "Sweet Is The Word For You", "Going My Way", "Count Your Blessings" and "Little One" instead of the million sellers whose films they shared. A tour de force that has, along with similar programmes from this pair of enthusiasts, kept The Old Groaner well to the fore within the range of their Wisconsin transmitter.

This column is running on a bit again, but there is so much material around on which to comment that it is difficult to know what to omit. So, in closing, all I can do is suggest you tune in for yourself and hear it as it happens. Merry Christmas!

Bert Bishop

Keeping Track

A Compact Disc Review by Jim Reilly

My last reviews listed CDs that were not actually available when I sent my copy to the editor. These were included in good faith as it was understood they would be released well before this issue of BING was printed. My copy date for the Summer issue was the 25th June and if I had left things out it would be nearly six months before I would get another chance to let you know of the proposed new releases. I hope that you understand my predicament. I have spoken to Ken Barnes about the BMG albums "Bing Crosby Meets Al Jolson" and "Bing Crosby Meets Frank Sinatra" and he thinks that these will now probably be released in the New Year. Ken has also mastered a further album in the series - "Bing Meets Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong". The delay with Jonzo albums was unavoidably caused by the ill health of the recording engineer.

The CDs keep coming unabated, so yet again I have some marvellous albums to review. There is a great album from Geoff Milne on the Avid label, the follow up album to "Memories" and the full collection of Decca Christmas titles courtesy of MCA (USA) and our man in the States, together with some other great MCA (UK) releases amongst others.

You And The Night And The Music — **Avid Records AMSC 633** — **UK**

I Love You Truly
The Sweetheart Waltz
The Touch Of Your Lips
Lovely Lady
Two For Tonight
Would You
For Love Alone
The Way You Look Tonight with Dixie Lee Crosby
Too Marvellous For Words
Sweet Is The Word For You
All You Want To Do Is Dance
Dancing Under The Stars
Let's Waltz For Old Times' Sake

This Is My Night To Dream
Let Me Whisper I Love You
Sweethearts
I'm Falling In Love With Someone - with Frances Langford
Yours Is My Heart Alone (You Are My Heart's Delight)
You Are The One
Don't Break The Spell
The Anniversary Waltz
Dearly Beloved
Let Me Call You Sweetheart
Strange Music
Does Your Heart Beat For Me

Our friend Geoff Milne produced this wonderful album for Avid. All those who are more enamoured with Bing in the thirties and early forties will I am sure really enjoy this CD. The quality is excellent throughout and it is very good value for money. To my knowledge about a dozen of the titles have not previously appeared on CD and quite a few have had very little exposure. A nice one to add to your collections. Some of you may have it already as it was released only a matter of days after I sent my reviews to the editor for the last issue and it was a great pity I was unable to include it then. Running Time: 75.10 Price: £6.99

More Memories — **MCA MCLD 19387 Cassette MCLC 19387** — **UK**

A Flight Of Fancy
Something Wonderful
Keep It A Secret
Pretty Baby
I Still See Elisa
At Last At Last
Skylark
The Sweetest Story Ever Told
Till The End Of The World
More And More
Sweet Lorraine
If You Stub Your Toe On The Moon
Granada

She Is The Sunshine Of Virginia
Oh Tell Me Why
Without A Word Of Warning
Home Cookin'
Strange Music
Blue Shadows And White Gardenias
I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me
Open Up Your Heart
Tobermory Bay
It's Anybody's Spring
Domino
The One I Love (Belongs To Somebody Else)
The Last Mile Home

I was very pleased with the response to the "Memories" album, which was well received by Crosby collectors and it was indeed a great pleasure to be asked by MCA to put together this follow-up album. It was decided to stay with the same formula as last time and I selected the titles from my list and those provided by Leslie Gaylor, Stan White and Ernest Sutkowski. Although I am probably not the best person to review it, I think that we have come up with a pleasant album that most collectors will enjoy. Overall the quality is very good and the mastering was carried out by that great sound man, Peter Reynolds in association with Ken Barnes. I first started working on my selections back in February and at that time most of the titles selected were new to CD. I had included 'Skylark' (previously on a 4CD Japanese set) because it is a wonderful song that would be known to the general public (my motive also being to obtain a much better quality copy of the song - mission accomplished!). One or two titles have also since appeared on other albums which is, I suppose, to be expected. I was also involved with the design of the sleeve and there is a nice array of Bing photographs included. I hope that all members will support this album (also available on cassette). My grateful thanks go to Alan Hodgson of MCA for giving me the privilege of working on this album and to Leslie Gaylor without whose input, this would have been impossible. I also appreciated the encouragement of Stan White, Ernest Sutkowski and many more members throughout the period I worked on it. Also I should acknowledge the help with photographs freely given by Ron Bosley and Arthur Blood. Running Time: 76.15 Price: £9.99

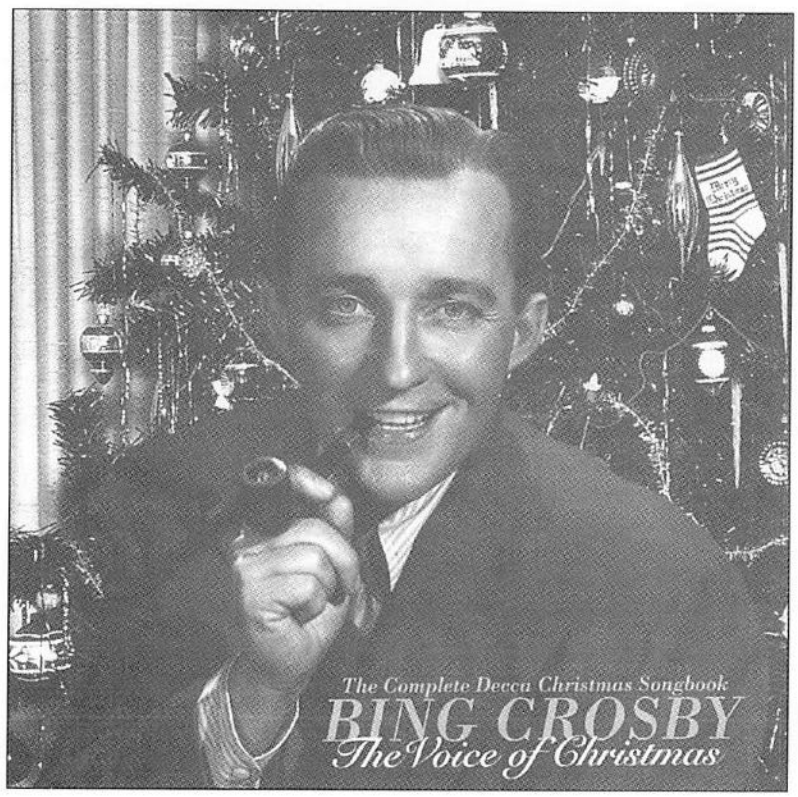
Bing Crosby The Voice Of Christmas
- The Complete Decca Songbook (2CDs) — **MCA MCAD2-11840**
USA

CD1 Happy Holiday, Silent Night (first version - previously unreleased) Adeste Fideles (first version), Silent Night (DLA 261A/B),

White Christmas (1942), Adeste Fideles (L 3025A), Silent Night (L 3026A), God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, I'll Be Home For Christmas, Ave Maria, White Christmas (1947), Silent Night (L 4375A), The Christmas Song, O Fir Tree Dark, The First Noel, You're All I Want For Christmas, Christmas Carols -Deck The Halls/ Away In A Manger / I Saw Three Ships, Christmas Carols - Good King Wenceslas / We Three Kings Of Orient Are / Angels We Have Heard On High, Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer, That Christmas Feeling, Looks Like A Cold Cold Winter, A Marshmallow World. Running Time: 64.06

CD2 Christmas In Killarney, It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas, Sleigh Ride, Sleigh Bell Serenade, Christmas Is A-Comin', The First Snowfall, Is Christmas Only A Tree, I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day, Jingle Bells - with Andrews Sisters, Santa Claus Is Comin' To Town - w. Andrews Sisters, Twelve Days Of Christmas - w. Andrews Sisters, Here Comes Santa Claus - w. Andrews Sisters, A Crosby Christmas Part 1 (That Christmas Feeling / I'd Like To Hitch A Ride With Santa Claus - Crosby Sons), A Crosby Christmas Part 2 (The Snowman / That Christmas Feeling / I'd Like To Hitch A Ride With Santa Claus - Crosby Sons), Poppa Santa Claus - w. Andrews Sisters, Mele Kalikimaka - w. Andrews Sisters, Silver Bells - w. Carol Richards, Little Jack Frost Get Lost - w. Peggy Lee, White Christmas - with Danny Kaye / Peggy Lee/ Trudy Stevens,: White Christmas (1942 alternate take - previously unreleased), Let's Start The New Year Right. Running Time: 62.50

This is the definitive collection of Bing's Yule time offerings from the Decca stable and all involved are to be congratulated for this truly impressive array of titles that make a great double album. 'The Voice of Christmas' is an apt title for this album which includes some rarities never before released either in the vinyl or CD formats. We have the very first versions of 'Silent Night' and White Christmas' that Bing sang. I think this alternate take of 'White Christmas' is better than the B take we have been listening to for all these years. This may be due to the fact that it might not have had too many plays since those far off days of 1942. The presentation of the album is excellent and there is a fine set of notes by our American colleague Wig Wiggins. Any UK members having difficulty in locating this CD can contact me and I will endeavour to get copies. If you do want a copy, please act quickly, as Christmas albums usually do not hang around for too long after the end of the festive season. Price: $25

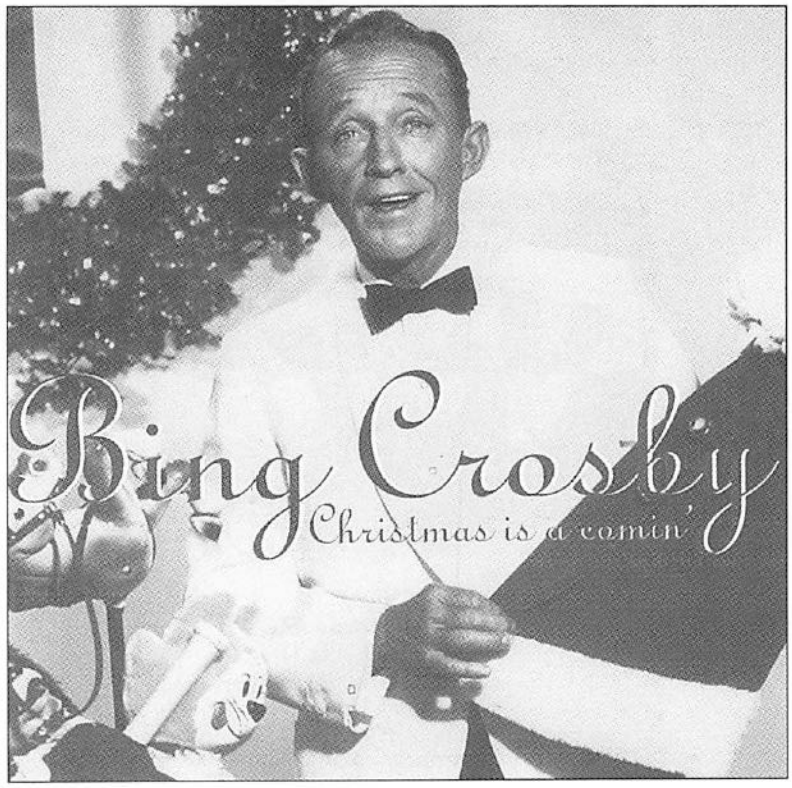


Christmas Is A-Comin'
White Christmas
It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas
Silent Night
Adeste Fideles
Twelve Days Of Christmas - w. Andrews Sisters
The Christmas Song
Jingle Bells w Andrews Sisters
Christmas Is A-Comin'
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Here Comes Santa Claus - w. Andrews Sisters
Is Christmas Only A Tree?
Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer
The First Noel

H/Moon Series HMNCDX100 (Cass. HMNMDX100) **UK**
I'll Be Home For Christmas
Silver Bells - with Carol Richards
O Fir Tree Dark
Christmas In Killarney
You're All I Want For Christmas
Mele Kalikimaka - with Andrews Sisters
I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day
Snow - with Danny Kaye, Peggy Lee, Trudy Stevens
Santa Claus Is Comin' To Town - with Andrews Sisters
That Christmas Feeling
Let's Start The New Year Right
Auld Lang Syne

This UK Christmas selection is unfortunately rather over shadowed by "The Voice Of Christmas" album. It is nevertheless a nice compilation of Christmas titles available as both CD and cassette. When I selected the titles for this album I had intended to include some non-MCA titles like 'Christmas Dinner Country Style', 'Christmas Candles' and others, but MCA's budget did not permit this. With 25 titles, we still have a great compilation with good sound quality that I am sure will make a nice addition to your collections.

Running Time: 69.06 *Price: £5.99 - £6.99 (it pays to shop around if you can)*



Silver Bells Of Christmas with
Bing Crosby & Rosemary Clooney **KRB Music Companies KRB8070-2** **USA**

Silver Bells
White Christmas
Adeste Fideles
Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer
O Little Town Of Bethlehem
Silent Night
The Christmas Song - Rosemary Clooney
Away In A Manger
It Came Upon A Midnight Clear - Rosemary Clooney
Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas - R. Clooney

American member Dennis Kane very kindly sent me a copy of this CD. Amazingly enough the title track purports to be Bing with Rosemary Clooney but unless she is disguising her voice somewhat it sounds suspiciously like Carol Richards. Without spending any time researching the source of this non-commercial material, I must say that the quality of the Bing tracks is not great. The three Rosemary Clooney titles are the best. Having only 10 tracks I would assume that this is a budget priced CD. Running Time: 25.24 *Price: Unknown*

Bing Crosby V Disc Recordings (4CDs) **Collector' Choice Cat. Number CGCCM35962** **USA**

Disc 1 Pennies From Heaven, Please, Shoo-Fly Pie Apple Pan Dowdy, Silent Night, Sioux City Sue, Down The Old Ox Road, Soon, Let's Take The Long Way Home, Strange Music, Swinging On A Star, That Sly Old Gentleman, The Christmas Song, There's A Small Hotel, These Foolish Things, My Heart And I, Too Romantic, All You Want To Do Is Dance, Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral, White Christmas, Love Is Just Around The Corner, June In January, You Call Everybody Darlin'

Disc 2 The One I Love Belongs To Somebody Else, One More Dream, Medley From Dixie Part 1: (Sunday Monday Or Always), Medley From Dixie Part 2: (Swing Low Sweet Chariot), Small Fry, One Alone, Poinciana, Bing Crosby Fluff, The Waiter The Porter And The Upstairs Maid, Wait Till The Sun Shines Nellie, A Friend Of Yours, Adeste Fideles, Back To Donegal, By The Light Of The Silvery Moon, Cowboy Medley Part 1 (I'm An Old Cowhand and I Can't Escape From You), Cowboy Medley Part 2 (Empty Saddles, Mr Paganini), Darling Je Vous Aime Beaucoup, Dear Old Girl

Disc 3 Down By The River, It's Easy To Remember, Let Me Call You Sweetheart, For Me And My Gal, Going My Way, I Promise You, I'll Be Home For Christmas, In The Good Old Summertime, In The Land Of Beginning Again, It Could Happen To You, Jingle Bells, Let It Snow, Pennies From Heaven Part 1, (Pennies From Heaven) Part 2, Medley from "The Fleets In"

Disc 4 Medley from "Waikiki Wedding", A Cranky Yank In A Clanky Old Tank, Clementine, Country Style, I'll Get By, I've Got My Captain Working For Me Now, Moonlight Bay, Only Forever, Riding Herd On A Cloud Tonight, What Do You Do In The Infantry?, All By Myself, Alexander's Ragtime Band, You Are My Sunshine, There'll Be A Hot Time In The Town Of Berlin.

With the exception of one or two titles, I was pleasantly surprised with the sound quality on this 4CD set. The last LP I had of some Bing's V-Disc recordings was appalling and I hardly ever played it. This set is exclusively available from Collectors Choice Music - a mail order catalogue in the USA. The only real complaint I have concerns the lack of recording details - it would have been nice to see recording dates, accompanists etc.- the sleeve notes concentrate only on historic information about the discs and only list the titles as shown above. I am given to understand that many of the songs in this collection were recorded at the same time as Bing's radio broadcasts. Some are from the actual broadcasts and others were recorded especially for V-Disc purposes. A number of commercial recordings were also used. V-Discs were manufactured under Government contract by Victor and Columbia (USA). More than 8 Million were made from 1943 -1949. When the V-Disc programme ended the government ordered that all masters and stampers must be destroyed. The artists had contributed their music free, and in many cases, recordings were made during the 1940s American Federation of Music recording ban. Perhaps some of our members would be able to provide more details as to exactly how many V-Disc recordings Bing made for the Armed Forces during the forties and provide some first hand experience relating to their distribution and how they came to hear these recordings in those far off days of WWII. I wish to thank that enthusiastic Bing Plugger, member Stan White for much of the above information.

Running Times: Disc 1: 53.52, Disc 2:54.07, Disc 3: 42.28, Disc 4: 39.50 *Price $49.95 plus $4.95 shipping (US).*

The Chronological Bing Crosby **Jonzo Records JZCD-3** **UK**

The Calinda (1)
Poor Butterfly (1)
Sunshine (2)
Sunshine (3)
From Monday On (3)
Mississippi Mud (2)
Mississippi Mud (3)
High Water
From Monday On (4)
From Monday On (6)
What Price Lyrics (1)
What Price Lyrics (3)
I'm Wingin' Home (2)
I'm Wingin' Home (3)
Metropolis - Part 3 (3)
Metropolis - Part 3 (4)
Lovable
March Of The Musketeers
I'm Afraid Of You (3)
I'm Afraid Of You (4)

It has been a long time since I have listened to this early part of Bing's career, but since receiving the CD I have heard it quite often and I must admit that I have thoroughly enjoyed listening to it. The quality is in the main very good and bright and there are certainly some interesting arrangements included; "The Calinda" and Bing's possible over dramatic treatment of the spiritual "High Water" are good examples. I also very much enjoyed Bing singing "Lovable". I suppose that if I was to be finicky I wish that there were not so many alternate takes, but you can always programme these out and listen to them separately. Price: £8.60 if bought singularly but £8.50 each if you purchase together with JZCD4. See below for details of where to obtain this CD and payment arrangements. Please note that I inadvertently gave the wrong price for this CD in the last issue of BING and my apologies go to John McNicholas for this mistake.

The Chronological Bing Crosby **Jonzo Records JZCD-4** **UK**

My Pet (1)
My Pet (2)
My Pet (3)
It Was The Dawn Of Love (1)
It Was The Dawn Of Love (2)
It Was The Dawn Of Love (3)
Dancing Shadows
Louisiana (1)
Louisiana (3)
Grieving
Do I Hear You Saying
You Took Advantage Of Me
La Paloma (2)
La Gololondrina
C-o-n-s-t-a-n-t-i-n-o-p-l-e (2)
C-o-n-s-t-a-n-t-i-n-o-p-l-e (3)
La Paloma (6)
Evening Star
Get Out And Get Under The Moon
'Tain't So Honey 'Tain't So
I'd Rather Cry Over You

I know that I have said it before but it is very hard to believe all the titles on this and JZCD3 were recorded some 70 years ago; the sound quality is so good. I think that in general all I said about the previous album applies to this one - I have enjoyed listening to them both. As far as I know the following titles are new to CD: 'Dancing Shadows', 'Grieving', 'Do I Hear You Saying', 'La Paloma' (2) and (6), 'La Gololondrina', and 'Evening Star'. There has always been some doubt as to the authenticity of 'La Paloma', 'La Gololondrina' and 'C-o-n-s-t-a-n-t-i-n-o-p-l-e', although quite a few collectors have them in their collections just in case Bing is in there somewhere. These CDs are only available in the UK and the rest of Europe from Jonzo Records PO Box 212, Harrow Middlesex HA3 7LD. Price £8.60 including pp. £17.00 for both this CD and JZCD-3. Cheques to be made payable to Jonzo Records. USA and Canadian Members can obtain copies from Wig Wiggins (address inside front cover).

Selection of Bing Crosby (2CDs) **Gold Sound - Promo Sound AG DCD-778** **Italy**

CD1 S'posin, Sweet Potato Piper, Stardust, I Surrender Dear, Birds Of A Feather, The Moon And The Willow Tree, Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams, Home On The Range, You Lucky People You, Going My Way, Marcheta, Anniversary Waltz, Ain't Got A Dime To My Name, Moonlight Becomes You, Welcome To My Dream, It's Anybody's Spring, White Christmas. Running Time: 52.54

CD2 But Beautiful, It's Always You, Would You, Lazy, When I Lost You, Be Careful It's My Heart, A Serenade To An Old-Fashioned Girl, A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square, Now It Can Be Told, My Melancholy Baby, Sweethearts, In My Merry Oldsmobile, Blue Hawaii, It Must Be True, East Side Of Heaven, Down By The Old Mill Stream, If I Had My Way, Shoe Shine Boy Running Time: 53.34

I don't know where this one has been hiding as I can't locate anyone in the UK who can get copies of this most pleasant album (supposedly released last year) - my copy came to me courtesy of Wig Wiggins. The quality is very good and it is nice to see 'When I Lost You' and 'Down By The Old Mill Stream' at last included on a Bing CD. Wig obtained our copies from Footlight Records. If you can find it, I would certainly recommend it, as it is great value for money for two CDs. Price: $10.95

Bing Crosby On The Sentimental Side **E2 ETCD 055** **UK**
How Deep Is The Ocean, On The Sentimental Side, Silver On The Sage, Someday Sweetheart, Dinah, Brother Can You Spare A Dime, Thanks, Moonlight Becomes You, Remember Me, Try A Little Tenderness, Too Romantic, This Is My Night To Dream, I'm A Old Cowhand, Goodnight Sweetheart, Too Marvellous For Words, Still The Bluebird Sings, Sweet Georgia Brown, The Moon Got In My Eyes, You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby, White Christmas
As you can see, there is nothing new on this CD, although it is nicely put together and the quality is good. It is also very inexpensive Running Time: 60.56 Price: £2.99

Bing Crosby - The Million Sellers **Prism Leisure PLAT CD295** **UK**
Swinging On A Star, Don't Fence Me In, You Are My Sunshine, Deep In The Heart Of Texas, Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral, It's Been A Long Long Time, South America Take It Away, Sunday Monday Or Always, Road To Morocco, Please, Pistol Packin' Mama, I'll Be Seeing You, McNamara's Band, Alexander's Ragtime Band, The Whiffenpoof Song, Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive, Moonlight Becomes You, San Fernando Valley, Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams, An Apple For The Teacher - with Connie Boswell, I'm An Old Cowhand, Pennies From Heaven, Walking The Floor Over You, White Christmas, Where The Blue Of The Night
With the exception of 'Walking The Floor Over You' most of the tracks have made regular appearances on CD. This is by nature of the contents a very pleasant album of Bing standards and I enjoyed listening to it.
Running Time: 73.15 Price: £2.99

23 Songs For Children **Big Rock Candy Mountain** **MCA HMNCDX102**
Cassette **HMNCMX102** **UK**
Burl Ives: Big Rock Candy Mountain, I Know An Old Lady, Blue Tail Fly, There's A Hole In My Bucket, What Kind Of Animal Are You, Waltzing Matilda, Hush Little Baby.
Danny Kaye: Tubby The Tuba, My Two Front Teeth, Thumbalina, Tongue Twisters, King's New Clothes, Ugly Duckling, I Taut I Taw A Puddy-Tat, I'm Late,
Bing Crosby: The Teddy Bears Picnic, The Headless Horseman, I Whistle A Happy Tune, Lullaby Land, Aren't You Glad You're You, Little Sir Echo, Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer, Swinging On A Star
I am sure that this album will bring out the children in most of us. I know that I very much enjoyed hearing these songs from childhood days - it is marvellous nostalgia! Three of the Bing titles are to my knowledge making their debuts on CD; these are 'The Teddy Bears Picnic', 'The Headless Horseman' and 'Lullaby Land'. I am sure that you will agree that the album is worth getting for Bing's contributions alone. This is anther fine album in MCA's Half Moon Series, which is also available on cassette. Running Time: 68.19 Price: £5.99 - £6.99

Radio - Chesterfield Shows **Bar - One Records BCR 7 - 9** **UK**
Space does not permit me to list all the titles that appear in this series but again I'll whet your appetites and give you a flavour of things by listing a few of the titles on each. The quality of all the albums in the series is very good.
BCR7 - 25 tracks including: Accidents Will Happen; I Still See Elisa; Sleigh Ride; If You Catch A Little Cold (I'll Sneeze For You); My Old Kentucky Home; Don't Ever Be Afraid To Go Home; Zing A Little Zong; I Cross My Fingers; Any Town Is Paris When You're Young
BCR8 - 26 tracks including: Mule Train; The Horse Told Me; Life Is So Peculiar; Mona Lisa; Looks Like A Cold Cold Winter; These Foolish Things; Five Foot Two Eyes Of Blue; Lullaby Of Broadway; Amor Amor; It's More Fun Than A Picnic; 'Way Back Home
BCR9 13 tracks mainly medleys with Al Jolson, Dick Powell, Judy Garland - Carolina In The Morning/My Blue Heaven/Alabamy Bound & Chesterfield Jingle/The One I Love- Play A Simple Melody/I Only Have Eyes For You/You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby/Jeepers Creepers - Bing & Judy Chat/ Hello My Baby/In My Merry Oldsmobile/Call Me Up Some Rainy Afternoon
Quite a number of members have now told me how much they enjoyed the first three albums in this Chesterfield series and that they were pleased with the quality. These latest releases can also be obtained through Barry Whittingham, El Rancho Grande, 25C Garton Close, Cinderhill, Nottingham NG6 8RZ. Cheques to be made payable to Barry. Price: £10 each

GUEST APPEARANCES
Perhaps I should point out that I don't go out of my way to take details of CDs with just one Bing title although if it is inexpensive to buy and I like all the other tracks/ artists I will include details.

The Great Crooners **Sound & Media Ltd SUMCD 4165** **UK**
18 Tracks (2 Bing) My Heart Is Taking Lessons and East Side Of Heaven
This is a pleasant CD with other artists including Frankie Laine, Tony Bennett, Dick Haymes, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole and Al Jolson Price £3.99

Christmas Time Again **MCA Half Moon HMNCD X103** **UK**
22 Tracks (4 Bing) White Christmas, Twelve Days Of Christmas with the Andrews Sisters, Adeste Fideles and Here Comes Santa Claus with the Andrews Sisters - other artists include Mel Torme, Dick Haymes, Pat Boone, Count Basie & the Mills Brothers, Jack Jones, Teresa Brewer, Judy Garland, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, The Ink Spots, Louis Armstrong, Eartha Kitt and the McGuire Sisters. Price £5.99

Bob Crosby & His Orchestra
Gone But Not Forgotten Vol. 14 -1940 **Submarine Records DHDL 135** **UK**
22 Tracks (7 Bing) Tea For Two, Yes Indeed, Christmas Greetings (Bing & Jack Kapp), San Antonio Rose, It Makes No Difference Now, Dolores and Pale Moon. Price £ 9.99

NON BING ITEM (I have included this CD because of Rosemary Clooney's long association with Bing particularly at this time of the year).

Rosemary Clooney - Christmas Kind Of Season KRB Music Companies KRB8068-2 USA

Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer, The Christmas Song, Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas, It Came Upon A Midnight Clear, Little Drummer Boy, Jingle Bells, White Christmas, Suzy Snowflake, Count Your Blessings, Silent Night

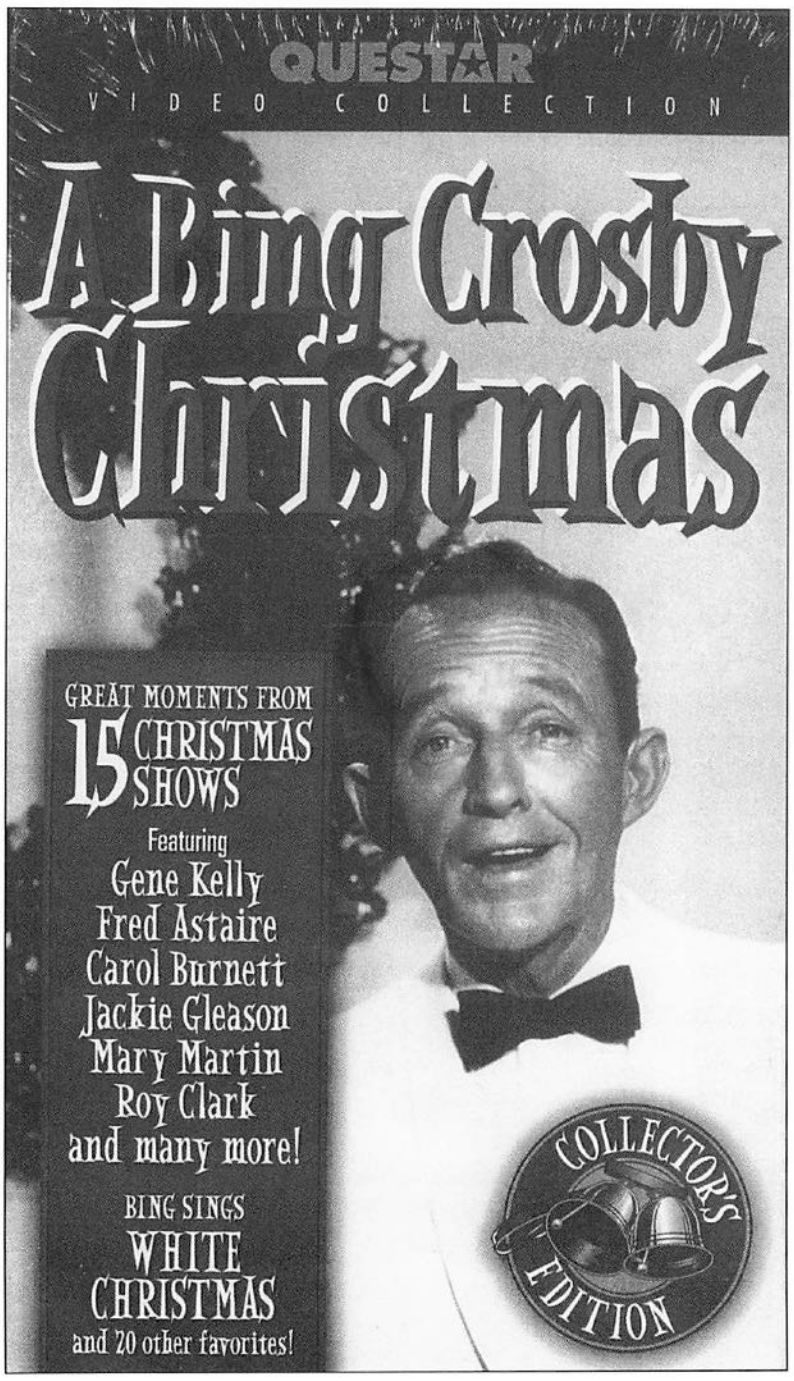
American Member Dennis Kane also sent me this delightful CD which I am sure will get many plays over the festive season in my household. It is attractively packaged and is a budget price album that I would recommend to anyone. It may not however be available in the UK. If members want it and do not take too long in letting me know I will see what I can do to get copies. *Price: Not known*

New Video - Frank Sinatra Live at The Edsel Show (b/w) ILC ILC0094 UK

Is this what you call Marketing? Funnily enough, I thought it should read 'Bing Crosby Presents The Edsel Show with guests Frank Sinatra, Louis Armstrong and Rosemary Clooney'. I must have got it wrong!!! Bing did of course host this excellent 1957 award-winning programme and the huge success of the show led to a major contract for Bing with ABC TV. The quality is good and the show makes for excellent viewing as it is full of fun and lovely songs which I am sure you will thoroughly enjoy. I picked up my copy at HMV - cost £10.99 (including 'Frank Sinatra On the Air' CD).

It doesn't seem possible that here we are again fast approaching the end of yet another year - where does the time go? May I take this opportunity in wishing all our members and their families a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year for 1999. Again, I must thank all those people who have been kind enough to help me throughout the year by sending me details of CDs. My particular thanks go to Charlie Baillie, Phil Clarke, Leslie Gaylor, Malcolm Macfarlane, Ernest Sutkowski, Stan White, Barry Whittingham and Wig Wiggins. If I have missed anyone, please do accept my apologies. Until next year.

Jim Reilly



A new video available in the USA

What the Papers Say

Space for only two excerpts this time. Important letters from two of our members to their local papers. Well done both of you!

EVENING VIEWS Evening

Don't forget anniversary of death of 'old groaner'

IN VIEW of the coverage rightly given to the 21st anniversary of Elvis Presley's death, may I remind readers of another 21st anniversary to be held in October — that of Bing Crosby.

It would be foolish to compare the two, or say which one was best, as they were both unique in their different ways.

So come October, I and many of Bing's admirers will in our special way remember "the old groaner" and doubtless "Barnsey" in his "gold for grown-ups" will be presenting his own tribute on BBC Radio Norfolk.

Incidentally, Bing, like Elvis, still has his fan club which issues a quarterly bulletin.

Anyone interested can get more information at the following address: 19 Carrholm Crescent, Chapel Allerton, Leeds LS7 2NL.

You'd be amazed at the amount of material that is still available.

R C Wilkinson,
Bull Close,
Norwich

BING C

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bing Crosby, left, with Grace Kelly and Frank Sinatra on the set of High Society, deserves as much as his friend Sinatra to be remembered as an incomparable performer of the 20th century, writes Gord Atkinson.

Crosby deserves same fame as Sinatra

While I greatly appreciated your excellent coverage of the death of Frank Sinatra, I was surprised and disappointed that your "Sinatra" editorial made no reference to Bing Crosby.

The writer states that, "with the possible exception of Edith Piaf, the greatest popular singer of the century was Sinatra."

On Oct. 17, 1977, following the sudden death of Bing Crosby, an *Ottawa Citizen* editorialist made this revealing observation: "Crosby indeed stood alone at the summit of popular singers. The one closest to him, Frank Sinatra, looked up to him, worshipfully and unabashedly, as The Master."

Sinatra himself said upon hearing of Crosby's death: "He was the idol of my youth, the father of my career and the dear friend of my maturity."

Sadly, it seems that Crosby's unmatched popularity and artistry are little known to the present generation. We senior citizens remember vividly the impact he had on the entertainment world and on the lives of those of us who grew up during the Great Depression and the Second World War. He was the most acclaimed and popular singer-entertainer of our time.

Like his friend Frank Sinatra, he should be remembered and celebrated as an incomparable performer of the 20th century.

Gord Atkinson, Stittsville

THE OTTAWA CITIZEN FRIDAY, MAY 22, 1998

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